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Women's participation motivation in rugby, cricket and netball body satisfaction and self-identity

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Women's Participation Motivation in Rugby, Cricket and Netball: Body Satisfaction and Self-Identity

Volume One

Katrina Marie Russell

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
University's requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

February 2002



C O V E N T R Y
U N I V E R S I T Y

Coventry University in collaboration with
the Rugby Football Union for Women

ABSTRACT

The main reasons behind women's participation in sport have been identified as team membership, cooperation and friendship. This is seen in contrast to competition, status and possible career opportunities found in relation to men's participation in sport. Research also suggests that participation in physical activity and sport increases women's sense of well-being and acceptance of body size and shape.

This thesis set out to explore the sporting experiences of women within rugby, cricket and netball. The first aim of the research was to investigate the participation motivation of women within three sports that differ in their levels of acceptability and required physical contact. The second and third aims were to examine how that participation might affect the development of self-esteem and body satisfaction. The final aim of the thesis addressed the issue of sporting identity development through exploring how participants in physical/non-physical, 'feminine'/'masculine' sports reflect on their sporting experiences. In addition the thesis considered how distinct parts of sporting participation such as clothing, team dynamics, physical contact and perceptions of sexuality synthesise to form the sporting identity of women rugby players, cricketers and netballers.

The research was based on Constructivist/Interpretivist principles and combined both quantitative and qualitative methods. Initially, three questionnaires were used to assess participation motives (Participation Motivation Questionnaire), body image (Multidimensional Body Self-Relations Questionnaire) and self-esteem (Multidimensional Self-Esteem Inventory).

The questionnaires were sent to rugby players, cricketers and netballers through their organising bodies. Following the questionnaire stage of the thesis, 30 interviews were conducted to further explore the relationship between participation in sport, perceptions of femininity and the function the body took in developing body satisfaction. Key to the investigation was how sport participation impacted on identity development and the strategies used to maintain that image. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was used to analyse the interview accounts, focusing on the meanings given to sport by the individuals themselves. Social constructionism was used as a framework for interpreting the data. This produced a rich account of sporting experience highlighting how body satisfaction and perceptions of femininity are constructed and reconstructed by sportswomen.

Findings from the questionnaires indicated that all sports rated team membership as the most important reason to participate in sport. Key findings demonstrated that satisfaction with physical appearance was strongly related to body areas satisfaction and global self-esteem for all sports. There was also no difference between sports on perceptions of physical attractiveness and all sports demonstrated significant relationships between satisfaction with physical appearance and body functioning. Following Stage One of the research process an interview schedule was developed that combined the key findings from each questionnaire and questions raised from the literature. The main findings from Stage Two highlighted how important sport is to these women, indicating a variety of techniques used to sustain an athletic image. It was also found that perceptions of femininity focused on the association of physical activity and sexuality. The assumption being that regardless of sport choice women were perceived as lesbian. Other key findings highlighted the transiency of body satisfaction. This refers to increases in body

satisfaction through playing sport not being sustained once the athlete has transferred herself to a social context. Other findings relate to the use of the body in sport and the enjoyment of overpowering an opponent. School experiences of sport are identified as key to the development of gender stereotypes and why being regarded as a 'sporty' person is so important.

The research on which this thesis is based suggests that sport comes to play an integral part in these women's lives and an activity that guided overall identity development. The thesis also highlights the transiency of body satisfaction and the inevitability of the lesbian stereotype due to participation in sport. The social constructionist interpretation of the data suggests how the shared vocabularies of body idioms that individuals embrace and use to judge other people determine the way in which we value physical behaviours and define physical attractiveness. The respondents demonstrated that regardless of prejudice and poor funding they still want to and enjoy the experience of sport participation. Potential research opportunities are also identified.

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PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

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Russell, K. M. (2000). 'Body on the line': The impact of women's participation in rugby. Association for the Advancement of Applied Sport Psychology, 2000 Conference proceedings, 54-55. Texas: RonJon Publishing

Russell, K. M. (2000). The impact on self identity : Female participation in cricket. Poster presented (oral defence) at BASES, 29th Aug-1st Sept 2000 Liverpool, England

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 My story

When I first moved to Coventry to undertake an MPhil/PhD I joined a local rugby club and over the next few weeks introduced myself and my work to my new teammates. During that period I began to structure the research questions I planned to investigate during the next three years. Having already decided to explore the reasons why women chose to play rugby, cricket and netball, I wanted to know more about the consequences of that participation. During this initial period of introduction I found that the women within my team reported a number of explanations for why they had joined and why continuing to play was so important. In particular they identified friendship development and maintenance as the key to their participation. That was when I met Susan.

Susan had recently taken up rugby, having been absent from active sports for a number of years. Her story drew me to an area of sporting experience that I had never considered before. She told me how her body size and shape had always been seen as a sporting inconvenience, not only by herself but portrayed as such by her P.E. teachers. Although I recognised that not all people enjoyed their P.E. experience, I could not truly empathise with Susan because I had always been one of those 'sporty' individuals at school. Susan went on to explain that she had always been made to feel clumsy and large, only suited for the dreaded roles of goal keeper in hockey and netball. Ultimately, this indicated to Susan that she was not 'sporty', having to play the positions that all those with any 'real' talent did not want. But when Susan talked about rugby her whole persona changed. She described to me the wonderful

experience of turning up to her first training session at the club and suddenly being valued because of her body size and shape. She recounted this experience to me again during our research interview:

...it was really flattering to have that sort of response, y'know and everybody was just so 'oh great you're really tall and...strong and, y'know perfect for the game'...being valued because of your size was something I had never experienced before

I had never had such a sporting revelation in my life and I was fascinated by it. That was when I decided that I was going to investigate the function or role the body performs in a given sport and its impact on overall sporting experience. I wanted to know if other women had had a similar experience of seeing their bodies as 'useful' and how this might impact on the identity of sportswomen. Essentially this thesis recounts my attempt to explore the complex relationship between sport choice, body satisfaction and identity.

The following sections of this chapter will do three things. Firstly, they will introduce to the reader the wider research area of women in sport, and why many governing bodies and government agencies are focusing on women's lack of involvement. Secondly, this chapter addresses the research under investigation by highlighting previous findings and indicating gaps in the present literature. These gaps help to formulate the research aims for the study. Thirdly, and finally, this chapter introduces the structure of the thesis.

1.2 Women in sport and physical activity

The area under investigation is primarily concerned with women in sport and experiences related to that activity. Previous research into physical activity participation rates amongst women and men (Allied Dunbar National Fitness Survey

[ADNFS], 1992) suggests that both groups exercise less than the age appropriate requirement for health benefits. What is more concerning is how this appears to be more of a problem for women than men. Although there are a number of barriers to exercise such as insufficient time, transport and money (Biddle, 1995) it appears that these present greater obstacles for women than men. The ADNFS also suggested that the definition of an individual as a 'sporty type' was a key indicator of participation/non-participation in exercise. Once again women were identified as less likely to exercise if they considered themselves to be non-sporty (ADNFS). This thesis, however, does not attempt to explain why women do not exercise, but rather seeks to explore the experiences of those women who do choose to participate in exercise and what being 'sporty' means to them. It will include a comparison between male (rugby and cricket) and female (netball) dominated sports, as this was identified as a key weakness in present research by both the United Kingdom and English Sports Councils (see Chapter 2 for more details).

When investigating women's experiences in a sport context the definition of those sports as acceptable or unacceptable is at the forefront. Sports are considered unacceptable either because of required physical contact with an opponent, or because the athlete demonstrates physical power whilst in that activity (Metheney, 1965). As more and more women participate in sports that do require physical contact, such as rugby, or the movement of a heavy object through space, such as hammer throwing, it is important to consider whether assumptions and restrictions of female participation are still based on notions of acceptability. By exploring the experiences of women in such activities it may be possible to identify if previous definitions of acceptable behaviour for women have changed. It may also be possible to determine if the level

of physicality displayed by female athletes still directs this assumption. This thesis addresses these questions but additionally seeks to identify the consequences of participation choice. Throughout the next eight chapters the thesis attempts to discover some of the consequences of sport participation and the extent to which it influences the lives of modern sportswomen.

1.3 Introduction to the research

The literature covered within this thesis draws on four main areas within sport psychology/sociology. Each area subsequently relates to a research aim. The aims of the research remained fluid throughout the period of the research to a certain extent, shifting throughout the process of data collection and analysis. Initially, the aims were simply to investigate participation motivation, body image and self-identity. As the research developed and became more sophisticated it was clear that the aims would have to be expanded to include more specific aspects of self-identity, such as self-esteem, the perception of femininity and the transiency of body satisfaction. This section refers not only to how the preliminary aims were identified, but also emphasises how the research was exploratory in nature. I identify the investigative nature of this study to highlight how considering women in sport and their experiences became more and more complex as the research process developed.

Firstly, the research addresses issues concerning participation motivation and the factors that contribute most to women playing sport. Theberge (1993) considers sport to be one of the most significant cultural practices in the construction of gender. As such the factors that influence a woman's participation in a traditionally male dominated sport would provide an insight into how acceptable behaviours are set

within our society and to what extent these restrict sport choice. Previous work has considered differences between male and female athletes noting that men generally regard sport as an avenue for future career opportunities whereas women are more interested in team oriented goals (Finkenberg & Moode, 1996; White, 1993, 1995). There is, however, a gap in the literature concerning the participation motivation of women in male dominated sports compared to women who participate in female dominated activities. This is exacerbated by the lack of research investigating women's participation in sports that require physical contact. **The first aim of the research was, therefore, to investigate the participation motivation of women within three sports (rugby, cricket and netball) that differ in their levels of acceptability and required physical contact.** A rationale for the choice of sports is discussed within Chapter 2, 'A review of women's participation in sport'.

Motives for participation are clearly only one aspect of the whole sporting experience and it is important to investigate the consequences of that participation. Through investigating an area that has been influenced by participation, a further insight into the benefits of physical activity¹ can be explored. Self-esteem was one such area considered and is the focus of the second research aim. The experience of sport has been shown to have a positive effect on women's lives (Folkins & Sime, 1981). It has also been demonstrated to reduce levels of stress and anxiety and to have a positive effect on depression, hypertension and self-esteem in adults (International Society of Sport Psychology, 1992). Although there is an abundance of work to suggest the benefits of physical activity, there is no real distinction between sport choice. **The**

¹ Physical activity as defined by Casperson, Powell and Christenson (1985) incorporates the following elements: the movement of the body produced by the skeletal muscles; resulting energy expenditure which varies from high to low; and a positive correlation with physical fitness. Although it is more often used within an exercise setting the term is used throughout this thesis to refer to the act of being physical, specifically relating to the involvement of women in organised sports.

second research aim, therefore, was to examine how self-esteem might develop through participation in a number of sports. Additionally this will serve to differentiate the factors that influence self-esteem development and maintenance in relation to the level of physical contact required to play and the social acceptance of women to play that sport.

The impact sport participation has on an individual's body image construction may provide the greatest insight into the sporting experiences of women. As such it was the focus of the third research aim. The physical self has been described as the major component of our self-expression and interaction with the world (Fox, 1997). Female participation in sport has been found to lead to greater positive perceptions of their bodies and an increased acceptance of their muscular shape (Furnham, Titman & Sleeman, 1994). Research identifying that body satisfaction stems from the adherence to the norm of a given sport (Furnham et al., 1994; Snyder & Kivlin, 1975) also indicates that the construction of a positive body image would differ between sports. There is a lack of research and understanding surrounding the impact of physicality on body image construction and the role the body takes within a sporting activity. **The third research aim, therefore, was to investigate sporting experiences of women in three sports that differ greatly in the level of physical contact required to play. The function a body performs in the playing arena and its relationship to body image construction will also be explored.**

In order to make sense of the overall impact of sport participation the research on which this thesis is based sought to place sporting identity and how that develops at the centre of the research process. Subsequently this becomes the fourth and final

research aim. Giddens (1991) argued that the physical self is at the root of how an individual creates their own identity. Research into this area is limited and fails to address the impact of the phenomena of sport experience and in particular female participation in male dominated sports. Anderson and Cychosz (1995) suggested that as role identity arises and evolves out of a social interaction (in this instance participation in sport), an individual might engage in behaviours deemed important to their role identity as an exerciser. It follows that domain specific identities may develop around an activity of choice and impact on the development of body image. **The final aim of the research was to address the issue of sporting identity development through exploring how participants in physical/non-physical, 'feminine'/'masculine' sports reflect on their sporting experiences. In addition it will examine how distinct parts of sporting participation such as clothing, team dynamics, physical contact and perceptions of sexuality synthesise to form that identity.** At this point in the research process other aims, such as the identification of perceptions of femininity and masculinity are identified. It also became apparent that the transient nature of body satisfaction was key to understanding the contradictions present in many of the respondent's accounts and was subsequently identified as an aim at the interview stage of the study. Identity development is a huge area to investigate within one research project but it became clear that the issue of femininity and body satisfaction transiency were key factors to explore.

1.4 Methodology and Methods

The thesis is set within a constructivist, interpretivist (see Schwandt, 1994 for an overview) framework, which not only seeks to describe the phenomenon of female sport experience, but also attempts to clarify the interrelated factors that contribute to

that experience. At the heart of the research process is the belief that to understand this experience one must interpret it. The researcher must identify the process of the construction of meanings and clarify what and how meanings are embodied in the language and actions of the individuals involved (Schwandt, 1994). It is also important to recognise that there are multiple 'knowledges' concerning that construction (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) and multiple experiences of one sport situation. In order to fully explore the range of experiences described by the respondents the thesis employed a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach to collecting data.

Within Stage One of the research questionnaires were employed to investigate participation motivation, self-esteem and body image. The results from these questionnaires provided a number of key factors thought to influence women's choice of sport and the consequences of that participation. Stage Two of the research utilised these factors to help inform the development of an interview schedule. Here the aim was to develop a series of discussion topics that would explore the interrelated factors of body satisfaction, body function and perceptions of sexuality. In this sense the interviews were semi-structured. A number of key questions were identified which were supported by a series of probe questions that helped guide the interview along. This approach also permitted the respondent to direct the interview in any direction they wanted to explore. The analysis of the interviews combined both phenomenological and symbolic interactionist philosophies through the use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith, 1996a). This focused on the subjective meanings given to the actions and experiences by the respondent themselves with a recognition of the interpretation of that meaning stemming from a

social constructionist background. This resulted in an in-depth analysis of the experiences of 30 sportswomen.

1.5 Introduction to the thesis

The thesis is set out in nine chapters. Chapter 2, 'A review of women's participation in sport', begins with a detailed literature review on the history of women in sport followed by research relating to participation motivation. The chapter continues with an examination of the research concerning self-esteem, body image and self-identity within a sporting context. This chapter describes both the development of ideas and a clear indication of the research aims.

Chapter 3, 'Methodology and Methods', describes the process of combining both quantitative and qualitative methods in the thesis and the dilemma behind using this approach. The chapter continues by clarifying the use of each of the three questionnaires with an explanation of its purpose and previous use in a sport related area. Following on from this discussion is an explanation of the need to use interviews in order to fully understand sporting experience. There is reference to the difficulties faced by psychologists and sport scientists alike when trying to provide an acceptable level of trustworthiness within qualitative work. The merits of such concerns in relation to the use of qualitative methods as a whole are also explored.

Chapter 4, 'Stage One Results', details the design of the questionnaire section of the thesis, with a description of each questionnaire used and the method of respondent selection. This is followed by a description of the findings and a discussion of the results with reference to previous research.

Chapters 5 through 8 are devoted to the interview data. Chapter 5, 'Sporting Identity' reflects on the interrelated themes of 'Personality Type', 'Sporting Attributes' and 'Team Identity'. Chapter 6, 'Femininity', focuses on the themes of the 'Perceptions of Femininity', the perceptions of women's 'Physical Capabilities' and the wearing of 'Skirts or 'Trousers'. This is followed by Chapter 7, 'Functionality', which focuses on the differences between perceptions of body satisfaction 'On Vs Off the Pitch/Field/Court', and the recognition of being 'Physically Valued'. The final data chapter, 'The Impact of Sport', aims to consolidate the wide-ranging consequences of sport participation. It does this by focusing on how sport is 'Part of Their Life', how the 'Transfer of Skills' is reflected upon, how 'School Perceptions' influence their acceptance of individuals and the 'Impact on the Body' as a result of sport participation.

The final chapter, 'Conclusion', attempts to bring together the whole thesis and to set it in its research context. There is an examination of the key findings and the contribution of the thesis to the existing literature on theory, policy and other applications. This is followed by a reflection on the research process itself and suggestions for changes to future studies. The chapter concludes with a consideration of possible areas for future work.

Chapter 2 A review of women's participation in sport

2.1 Introduction

Research based on women's participation in sport has moved beyond the consideration of relative opportunities into understanding the cultural meaning and significance of their participation (Birrell & Theberge, 1994). This shift recognises the need to move away from simply highlighting the inequality of sport provision and more towards how and why women choose to take part in sport and the consequences of that participation. At both international and domestic levels the importance of women's contribution to sport has been recognised. The Brighton Declaration on women and sport (1994)² stated its overriding aim was to “develop a sporting culture that enables and values the full involvement of women in every aspect of sport” (p.51). In addition one of the principles guiding the Declaration was that “those responsible for research and providing information on sport should develop programmes to increase knowledge and understanding about women in sport and ensure that research norms and standards are based on research on women and men” (p.52). Taking this principle into consideration sport development programmers and administrators should promote female participation in all forms of sport including the more non-traditional activities. The emphasis should be on enjoyment and the benefits to health and not as a method to delineate acceptable behaviour. Research also has a responsibility to provide information on women in sports such as rugby and cricket to ensure that comparisons are made sport to sport rather than across gender divisions.

²The Brighton declaration resulted from the ‘Women, Sport and the Challenge of Change’ conference which took place in Brighton, UK in May 1994. Details were taken from the United Kingdom Sports Council report (1998) *Women and Sport : From Brighton to Windhoek Facing the Challenge*.

Taking a more national direction the English Sports Council (1995)³ raised concerns about the research currently taking place with women in sport and identified many weaknesses. One omission is the “general lack of knowledge about the positive aspects of women's experience of sport in Britain” (9.3.2). In addition there is concern that participation/non-participation is affected by gender expectations. Subsequently it was noted that there is a need to

move away from research based on dichotomous personality models, which equate sporting qualities with masculinity and thus inevitably perpetuate the notion that sport is intrinsically unfeminine. More appropriate methodologies, which accept the validity of women's sporting attributes as dimensions of their femininity (English Sports Council, 1995, 4.5.2) are therefore required.

These concerns suggest that research must identify how women experience sport, how they give subjective meanings to that experience and how self-identity changes or becomes rooted in that experience. It also suggests that there is a need for exploring female sporting experience in sports that have been previously considered the domain of men. By exploring and understanding women's sporting experiences and the restrictions under which many women participate, research may identify factors that contribute most to the reality of their sporting world. This acknowledgement can help place the focus on the positive aspects of women's participation and guide appropriate sanctions of change.

This thesis and the research on which it is based addresses the experiences of three female sport groups, rugby players, cricketers and netballers. It is appropriate at this stage to highlight why these sport groups were chosen and their representation within all sport. Rugby was chosen as a sport because it is still dominated by men and

³ Kay, T. (1995). Women and sport : A review of research. English Sports Council Publications.

involves high levels of physical contact. As one of the key considerations of this thesis is the relationship between the role of the body and its impact on overall body satisfaction the inclusion of this sport was deemed vital. Within the rugby playing community women's participation is far less than that of men's. There are 150 registered English clubs with an estimated 6,000 women playing (1996), and 50 Scottish clubs with 1,000 senior players (1997) (Women's Sport Foundation personal communication, Nov 1999). The numbers of men and boys playing rugby union differ greatly to this. According to the International Rugby Football Board (February, 1998, personal communication, Nov 1999), the United Kingdom has the largest population of male rugby players in the world. There are a total of 2,049 clubs with 1,426,000 men and boys playing rugby in England, 279 clubs with 43,120 players in Scotland, 205 clubs with 64,433 players in Ireland, and 372 clubs with 52,700 players in Wales (a total of 2,905 clubs and 1,586,253 players). These statistics clearly demonstrate the prevalence of men within rugby.

Cricket was also chosen because men dominate this activity. The English Cricket Board (October 1997-September 1998, Women's Sport Foundation personal communication, Nov 1999) provides participation rates that indicate a similar trend to that of rugby. There are around 354,040 primary and 138,908 secondary school girls, in addition to 4,267 women who play cricket in England and Wales (a total of 497,215). In comparison, there are 625,350 primary and 649,067 secondary school boys alongside 220,748 men playing cricket (totalling 1,495,201). These statistics suggest that there is a difficulty in maintaining girls participation in cricket in this country. The main difference between cricket and rugby is the level of physical

contact needed to play. Cricket was thus chosen because it still had the recognition as a male sport but does not require any physical contact.

Netball was chosen because it was the only female dominated sport played competitively and with large numbers within this country. Participation rates are only available for women who play netball in this country and account for around 60,000 adults and 1,000,000 school girls in England; 2241 adults and 500 schools in Wales; 1,178 adults and 70 senior clubs, 17 high schools, 230 primary schools in Scotland; and 2620 adults and schoolgirls in Ireland play netball (Women's Sport Foundation personal communication, Nov 1999). Netball was considered to be an ideal comparison sport because of the dominance of women and the demonstration of moderate levels of physical contact.

The rest of this chapter reviews the literature on women's participation in sport. It takes into consideration the motives underlying that participation, the impact of participation on self-esteem and body image and how these factors might influence the development of self-identity. The review clarifies the major areas of interest previously investigated pointing to the lack of knowledge surrounding women in rugby, cricket and netball. Much of the research is based on the comparison between men and women or between those who do participate in sport versus those who do not. In addition the review indicates that physicality among female sport participants has not been fully investigated as an avenue for identity development or body satisfaction. The following sections also highlight the development of the research addressed by this thesis.

2.2 Historical legacies

Sport is considered to be a significant cultural practice in the construction of gender (Theberge, 1993; Whitson, 1990) and as such any discussion on female sporting experiences must consider the roots of prejudices that still persist in the twenty first century. The nineteenth and early twentieth century's beliefs relating to the physical capabilities of women were based primarily on their reproductive role. At this time women's participation in physical activity evoked a myriad of fears, concerns and misplaced analyses of the detrimental effects of those activities, ultimately leading to the 'myth of frailty' (Cahn, 1994; Hargreaves, 1994; Theberge, 1989). Experts from the fields of medicine, legislation and theology took the role of moral guardians and bolstered the opinion that too much physicality for women could lead to reproductive and social disaster (Vertinsky, 1988).

This medicalisation of female bodies, as argued by Vertinsky (1988) was used as an agent for men to dominate and control women at this time. Vertinsky (1988) also suggests that the anxieties of physicians and social commentators alike focused on the need of women to obey the laws of nature. The solution was simple; women had a duty to make the 'reproductive sacrifice' providing the next generation of Empire builders. Any activity, therefore, which might prevent this progression, was seen as dangerous. The cultural values and attitudes of the Victorian period determined the limits of female activity and also promoted the notion that male superiority within sport was regarded as 'natural' (Hargreaves, 1994). Physical activity for women subsequently came to be associated with certain 'mannish' behaviours and deemed wholly inappropriate (Cahn, 1994). Concerns were not only founded on fears of women displaying lesbian tendencies, but that they may also behave in an overtly

heterosexual manner, as men of poor moral quality did. Again fear rested on the notion that women who pursued a promiscuous lifestyle (associated with low morals) would not provide heirs to continue British interests abroad or legitimate children to claim family fortunes.

Cahn (1994) extends these notions by arguing that as women participated increasingly more in sport in the first part of the twentieth century concerns were expressed that, if women 'surrendered their sex' to take up masculine sports, they might also assume the prerogatives and power of men in other domains. Scraton (1992) points to present times indicating that the legacy of women as frail and subordinate individuals has not altered a great deal since the Victorian age.

2.3 Twentieth and Twenty First century male hegemony, media images and the sexualisation of the female athlete

Sabo and Messner (1993) argue that the prevailing model of masculinity in twentieth century culture emphasised aggression, dominance and physical strength. Femininity on the other hand encompassed ideals of passivity, dependence and physical frailty. The maintenance of this hegemony has supported men in the control and domination of women. In Western cultures the sporting world has taken a definitive role. Whitson (1990) argues that sport, not only helps boys construct their expectations of themselves in social relationships with women and other men, but also serves as a site in constructing male solidarity. Sport is regarded as a male preserve (Dunning, 1994) and an area in which images of ideal masculinity are constructed and promoted (Connell, 1987). Boys learn what it is to become 'men' and notions of the differences between men and women, and between men who do and do not compete, are also

developed (Connell, 1987). These differences often reflect notions of the differences between men and women's physical capabilities and the questioning of the sexuality of men who do not play competitive sport. Similarly, Connell (1987) argues, sport provides the avenue in which many girls construct their identities, forming boundaries for acceptable behaviour, future sporting career opportunities and notions of their importance in the sporting world.

When considering how sport is constructed and interpreted by the population the use of television, Internet, radio and magazines cannot be underestimated. The media takes a distinctive role in the development of certain ideals concerning, not only the superiority of male performance over females but in the definition of acceptable female behaviour and appearance. Wright and Clarke (1999) argue that media representations of sport are extremely powerful in naturalising and normalising hegemonic meanings about the body and social relations. Gender divisions in sport are portrayed as the result of biological differences (Klein, 1988). This occurs through the use of male standards and norms to evaluate and interpret women's performances reproducing an ideology of masculine superiority (Hall, 1996; Hargreaves, 1994; Messner, 1988; Pirinen, 1997).

Duncan (1990) investigated the coverage of Florence Griffiths Joyner's 1988 Olympic performance and noted the focus of many journalists on the make up, long nails and revealing running suits typical of 'Flo Jo' at that time. Such trivialisation and sexualisation of women's sport constitutes a denial of power for the sportswoman and only serves to promote the idea of female athleticism as less than male (Duncan & Hasbrook, 1988; Kane & Greendorfer, 1994). In addition to these findings there is a

growing body of work surrounding the issue of compulsory heterosexuality for all female athletes (Wright & Clarke, 1999). Through this dictate, Wright and Clarke argue, all other forms of sexuality are denied legitimacy resulting in a form of social and sexual control through the naturalising and normalising of (hetero)-sexual relations both within and outside of sport.

2.4 Acceptable behaviours

In addition to the present discourse on compulsory heterosexuality is the relationship between acceptable sporting behaviours and gender identity. Metheney's (1965) classic work concerning the definition of sports deemed appropriate for women and men has been found to hold true 25 years later. Kane and Snyder (1989) confirmed gender stereotyping of sports and more explicitly identified physicality as the central feature. Sports such as gymnastics, swimming and tennis are acceptable forms of exercise for women because they permit the athlete to maintain a level of gracefulness. The aesthetic quality of their bodies is enhanced and body contact is not required in competition. In contrast, sports such as wrestling, boxing or weight lifting require a substantial amount of bodily force being used. Resisting or overcoming an opponent is essential and sports can contain movements that do not lend themselves to traditionally 'feminine' patterns.

Sport is being utilised, as in Victorian times, not only as an institution which promotes and ultimately naturalises male values and behavioural norms, but which accentuates and glorifies certain 'ways of being' male (Whitson, 1990). In this manner male privilege is confirmed and female subordination bolstered (Whitson, 1990). Shilling (1993) argues that the physical-self can be regarded as a 'project', in which time is

devoted to developing and adapting the shape of the body. Concern emerges when restrictions on women's identities and appropriate behaviours may have more impact on what the body may become than individual choice and desire.

Recognising that women have struggled to take their place alongside men and to be accepted in the sporting world the question now arises as to the reasons behind their participation. The following section details a number of theories relating to participation motives and highlights the possible outcomes of that participation on female experience.

2.5 Participation motivation

The area of participation motivation addresses the general questions of how and why people choose to take part in physical activity. There are many reasons why individuals participate, some being motivated by a drive for competence (Harter, 1978), while others are more directed by achievement-goal orientations (Duda, 1992; Nicholls, 1984). These approaches highlight the role that achievement-related cognitions play in motivating behaviour (Weiss & Glenn, 1992).

Competence motivation theory proposed by Harter (1978, 1981) suggests that individuals are motivated to be competent in their own social environment and engage in mastery attempts to reach that level of competence. In this instance this would include learning and demonstrating sport skills. Success and positive reinforcement of that success results in feelings of efficacy, ultimately leading to continued motivation to participate (Elliot et al., 2000). Based on competence motivation theory, individuals high in perceptions of competence and internal control will exert more

effort, persist at achievement tasks longer, and experience more positive affect than individuals lower on these characteristics (Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992).

Participation motives have been strongly linked to high levels of perceived competence (Feltz & Petlichkoff, 1983; Gould, Feltz, Horn & Weiss, 1982). Klint (1986), however, found that former gymnasts reported higher perceptions of physical and social competence than did current gymnasts. Investigating this discrepancy Klint and Weiss (1987) found that children high in perceived physical competence were more motivated by skill development reasons, while gymnasts high in perceived social competence were more motivated by affiliation aspects of sport. According to Harter's theory, children were motivated to demonstrate competence in those areas in which they perceived themselves to have high abilities (Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992). Results such as these indicate that other variables, such as the knock-on effects of having and maintaining an identity as a gymnast, may influence motives for participation (Roberts, 1992). Ommundsen and Vaglum, (1991) for example, found that boys with a higher perception of soccer ability had higher levels of enjoyment leading to greater participation motivation. Coaching styles have also been implicated in the relationship between an individual's perception of competence, enjoyment and subsequent participation. Athletes who perceived a greater frequency of contingent praise, information, and encouragement plus information and a lower frequency of criticism reported higher self-perceptions of ability, greater enjoyment and a preference for optimally challenging tasks (Allen & Howe, 1998; Black & Weiss, 1992). Such findings supports the view that other socialisation factors, including the role of parental influence may have a greater impact on competence perceptions and reasons to participate than first thought (Brustad, 1992).

Such work is closely associated with self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1986), whereby perceptions of one's ability to successfully complete a specific task can influence choice of activities, effort, persistence and achievement (Schunk, 1995). In considering motives for participation in exercise it would appear that individuals who regard themselves to be more physically capable are more likely to adopt and maintain a lifestyle in which exercise plays an important role (McAuley, 1992). Self-efficacy has proved successful in predicting exercise participation (Sallis, Hovell, Hofstetter & Barrington, 1992), and in discriminating adherers from dropouts in an exercise weight loss program (Rodgers & Brawley, 1993). Although self-efficacy has consistently predicted involvement in physical activity (Biddle, 1997) there are concerns that it should be assessed in relation to a wide variety of sporting behaviours before any real level of behaviour prediction is to be attained (McAuley, 1992). In relation to sports that require high levels of physical contact the perception of one's ability to successfully complete a task may be related more to the level of physical power demonstrated than to a particular skill.

One area which might help in the prediction of participation is the meaning attached to achievement oriented behaviour. Duda (1993) discusses how she utilised Maehr and Nicholls' (1980) work on achievement motivation in education was transferred into a more sport-oriented domain. Through the development of the Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ; Duda & Nicholls, 1992) Duda suggested that individuals strive to demonstrate competence in achievement settings through the adoption of two distinct goals: task goals and ego goals. Task-oriented individuals define success in terms of personal improvement and task mastery, whereas

individuals who define success as winning or demonstrating superior ability relative to others would be considered more ego-oriented (Duda, 1993).

Reviews of achievement motivation research (Duda, 1992, 1993) have concluded that there are consistent relationships between the beliefs and values based on sporting experiences and achievement-related behaviours. Duda, Fox, Biddle, and Armstrong (1992) argued that motivational variables were consistently related to goal orientations. Among 11- to 12- years olds task orientation in sport was associated with a focus on co-operation and the belief that success in sport results from effort. Children, who were classified as ego-oriented, demonstrated the belief that success in sport is related to ability and emphasised work avoidance and/or deceptive tactics. Similar results were found in a wide range of activities and age groups including 8- to 15- year old basketball participants (Hom, Duda & Miller, 1991), high school students (Duda & Nicholls, 1992), adolescents at a summer tennis camp (Newton & Duda, 1995) and young disabled athletes who participate in wheelchair basketball (White & Duda, 1993).

Although these findings are striking it does appear that as the level of competitiveness increases task and ego goal orientations tend to become more balanced. Working with elite interscholastic skiers, Duda and White (1992) found that success was strongly related to task orientation but that a belief in success stemming from ability was also salient. Similarly children demonstrating the most positive motivational profile and greatest involvement in physical activity were those high in both task- and ego-orientation (Fox, Goudas, Biddle, Duda & Armstrong, 1994). What these results demonstrate is the impact competition has on goal orientation. Recognising this factor

and the differing perceptions of success noted by athletes, coaches, psychologists and teachers could provide more appropriate sporting programmes to a variety of participants. Coaches and sport psychologists can select more task-oriented athletes for positions of greater workload and teachers can help younger athletes recognise the changing dimensions of success.

The reasons why individuals decide to participate in an activity constitute an important component of the subjective meaning given to that activity (Maehr & Braskamp, 1986). Employing both The Participation Motivation Questionnaire (Gill, Gross & Huddleston, 1983) and the TEOSQ a clearer picture of the relationship between goal orientation and participation motivation was found. White and Duda (1994) found that athletes high on ego-orientation were more likely to participate in sport for the competition and potential recognition than team membership objectives. Athletes who were more task-oriented placed a greater emphasis on fitness and skill development as reasons for their participation. Findings also confirmed that male athletes were significantly higher in ego-orientation than females regardless of competitive involvement. The beliefs about success in physical activity have also been found to correlate to task- and ego-orientation. Walling and Duda (1995) indicated that students high in task-orientation were more likely to believe that success was achieved through intrinsic interest, co-operation and effort. High ego-oriented students, however, held the belief that success stemmed from ability.

Gender differences among participation motivation have been found among a variety of age groups and sports, the indication being that men also receive different rewards from that experience. White (1993) found that female intercollegiate skiers placed a

greater emphasis on team-oriented goals whereas males were more interested in status and personal gain. Later studies (Finkenberg & Moode, 1996; Gill & Dzewaltowski, 1988; White, 1995) have also highlighted that males generally regard the purpose of sport as an agency to further future career opportunities and heighten social status. Women hold the alternative perspective that sport provides a means for developing personal mastery and to become a healthy and socially aware citizen. There does appear to be a relationship between the purpose of sport and how individuals wish to be remembered after high school. Studies have consistently shown that the majority of males preferred to be remembered as athletic stars, whereas females selected the roles as leader in activities and brilliant student (Holland & Andre, 1994, 1999; Kane, 1988). It may simply be, however, that as women do not have equal career opportunities in sport, factors that could be attributed to career based goals have little or no influence.

In terms of competitiveness, research does suggest that men are more competitive than women. Gill and colleagues (Gill, 1988; Gill, Williams, Dowd, Beaudoin & Martin, 1996) investigating gender differences in competitive orientations found that although females and males are equally achievement-oriented, males are more oriented toward achievement in competitive, interpersonal situations. Sport competition for men provides more lucrative opportunities than for women and may, therefore, amplify this gender difference. The Women and Sport Guide (Women's Sport Foundation personal communication, Nov 1999) provides information relating to the discrepancies between women and men's sponsorship deals. In 1994 there was £250m spent on sports sponsorship in the UK, less than 0.5% of which could be attributed to women's sport. In the same year Sally Gunnell had an earning potential

of £500,00 in comparison to Linford Christie who had the potential to earn £1.75m. These differences demonstrate that even with Olympic success women are losing out to men and could, therefore, influence a woman's decision to become a full-time athlete.

Other motives involved in sport participation have similar gender differences. Both female adolescents and intercollegiate students indicated the social and affiliative aspects of sport participation in sport as far more important than they were for male counterparts (Flood & Hellstedt, 1991; Ryckman & Hamel, 1992). Ryckman and Hamel also indicated, however, that those girls who were involved extensively in sport were more achievement oriented than girls who were not as involved, suggesting that challenge and competition were still highly important factors.

It is evident from previous research that the motives for participation are different for women and men, although as in a similar vein to competitive sport orientation (Gill, 1993), it may be dangerous to rely on overall assumptions because of the multidimensional nature of participation. Motives for participation in one sport may be so sport specific that relying on motives taken from a purely male or female population may not indicate anything about gender differences, as in the case of playing netball at school level. A review of the literature (1983-2000) based on studies utilising the PMQ, TEOSQ, the Sport Orientation Questionnaire (SOQ) and the Purpose of Sport Questionnaire (PSQ) indicated very little if any evidence for women who participate in sports deemed as inappropriate because of the physical contact aspect. Similarly there is no evidence for a comparison between female participants in sports that are inappropriate but non-contact (cricket) and contact

(rugby), and appropriate but non-contact (netball). There is a need, therefore, to investigate if women choose to participate in sports that are regarded as masculine for similar motives as their male counterparts or for the more 'feminine' affiliative reasons indicated by previous research.

By comparing the participation motives between female rugby players, cricketers and netballers a clearer picture behind the experiences of initial entry into these sports will be found. The next step is to then examine the consequences of that participation. One area in which there has been a wealth of research is the relationship between sporting activities and self-esteem. Considering both the positive and negative aspects of sport can help to clarify how and why physical activity impacts on everyday life.

2.6 Self-esteem

One of the main difficulties in determining the relationship between exercise and self-esteem is being able to define what self-esteem is. Fox (2000) argues that the wealth of research on this topic suggests that it would be difficult to find a psychological construct that has received greater attention. One reason why the definition of self-esteem has been so problematic is the wide-ranging use of the construct by both individuals and government organisations. Self-esteem as a concept has been described as an awareness of good possessed by the self (Campbell, cited by Fox, 1997, 2000). Fox (2000) adds that the criteria and content of self-esteem is determined by both the individual and the culture in which s/he lives. An individual might attach value to specific behaviours, such as sporting talent or the acceptance of certain social moirés. Each person will identify with an individual set of attributes and achievements, placing greater value on some aspects more than others. As Fox (2000)

concludes, the “criteria on which self-esteem is based is ultimately set by the individual. Self-esteem is therefore essentially phenomenological and based on being an ‘OK person’ dependent on what the individual considers as ‘OK’” (Fox, 2000, p. 90). With this definition in mind the research explored how respondents expressed self-esteem, both as a score on a structured questionnaire and clarified within interviews.

Research focused within this domain has indicated the positive effects exercise can have on a variety of health issues. The Allied Dunbar National Fitness Survey (ADNFS) (1992) supports such research by pointing to the positive relationship between physical activity and perceptions of health and well-being. This survey completed among the English population reflects both North American and International views on the importance of exercise on people's mental health. The International Society of Sport Psychology's (ISSP, 1992) position statement concurs with the American National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) (Morgan & Goldston, cited in Mutrie & Biddle, 1995) on this issue. The following points were highlighted: exercise is associated with reduced state anxiety; with reductions in mild to moderate depression; long-term exercise is associated with reductions in traits such as neuroticism and anxiety; and exercise results in the reduction of various stress indices.

Recent reviews on the relationship between exercise and self-esteem (Fox, 2000; Sonstroem, 1984, 1997a) provide a number of key findings relating to this relationship. It appears that self-esteem is not directly related to increases in physical fitness but it is more the perception of an improvement in fitness that is associated with positive self-perceptions. Fox (2000) also suggests that the results appear

stronger for aspects of the physical self and in particular aspects of body image. Other concerns relating to the causal effect of exercise on well-being relate to those individuals with initially low levels of self-esteem. Sonstroem (1984) suggests that although this relationship appears strong it is difficult to establish “either those who perceive themselves to be in good health are more attracted to exercise or that exercise helps people feel better about themselves”, (Mutrie & Biddle, 1995, p. 55). Any relationship, therefore, found through questionnaire measures should not be overemphasised until a confirmatory explanation can be discovered through interviews or other qualitative methods.

The perception of the physical self may have the strongest impact on our overall self-esteem. Fox (1997) argues that having consistency in the self helps to develop unity, uniqueness, independence and control. This provides a framework on which the self can organise and make sense of its interactions with life, a reification of the self. He goes on further to discuss the difficulty in hiding the physical self as it is

...subject to critical changes throughout the life span and therefore needs constant reappraisal. If the physical appearance or physical abilities are not consistent with the inner representations or aspirations of the self, then a sense of dissonance will emerge and act as a potential source of low self-esteem (Fox, 1997, p. 117).

In terms of discussing the positive benefits of exercise a cautionary note should be taken due to the overwhelming evidence stemming from North American based samples. European based research does, however, support the findings in nonclinical populations that exercise does have a positive effect on mood and self-esteem (Moses, Steptoe, Mathews & Edwards, 1989; Sonstroem, 1984). Experimental results in this area appear to show that there are only limited effects of exercise on mood state but

this may be as a result of the people attracted to exercise studies initially. Such individuals may already be psychologically healthy and so indicate little improvement on measures used to assess positive mood change (Mutrie & Biddle, 1995). Although this may be the case, non-experimental research does point to the positive effects of exercise on mood and self-esteem because individuals still perceive the benefits of exercise (Biddle & Mutrie, 1991).

2.7 Body image and body satisfaction

In considering the components of self-esteem, it may be that perceptions of one's physical self in an environment that has the strongest impact. Fox (1997) even argues that the physical self has become the major component of our self-expression and interaction with the world. As such it is seen to hold the key to understanding the total self. He continues by positing that "the body and its appearance have become a focal point of social interaction, sexuality, functionality and health as well as carrying a multitude of membership labels" (Fox, 1997 p. 123).

Taking the presence of the body within physical activity the actions the body performs can be considered significant when examining the impact of that action. The perceptions of others, recognition of performances and acceptance as an athlete become even more salient when discussing women's participation in sports traditionally deemed as 'masculine'. The influence of physicality and how it might impact on women's sporting experiences should be noted at this stage. For the purposes of this thesis physicality is defined as the bodily experiences of physical activity. For women who participate in sports that require physical contact this bodily experience may come to bear the greatest influence on enjoyment, recognition and

value of that experience. McDermott (2000) conducted her research under the premise that “body perception is fundamental to women's experiences of their physicalities” (p.342). What is also important to note is how McDermott (2000) found that women who took part in wilderness canoeing reflected on their physical activity experiences as shaping life-long experiences of the self. She noted that for some women “their physical activity experiences shaped not only how they experienced themselves through those activities, but also more generally shaped the meaning and significance of physical activity in their lives” (McDermott, 2000 p.357). The mere experience of being physical greatly influenced how these women interpreted their physicality (and the physical presentation of their bodies) in and throughout their lives. This research investigated how women in activities that required differing levels of physical power experienced the sensation of *being* physical.

Women who exercise have greater positive perceptions of their own bodies and have an increased acceptance of their muscular shape (Furnham, Titman & Sleeman, 1994; Richards, Peterson, Boxer & Albrech, 1990). However, it has also been argued that excessive emphasis on fitness and the aesthetic quality of body shape has led to an increase in eating disorders among female sport participants (Petrie, 1996; Striegel-Moore, Silberstein & Rodin, 1986; Taub & Blinde, 1994). In consideration of these findings athletes who participate in sports which do not emphasise a specified weight or shape, might, therefore, display greater positive perceptions due to other intervening variables.

Body satisfaction may stem from the adherence to the norm of a given sporting activity (Furnham et al., 1994; Snyder & Kivlin, 1975), implying that perhaps the

beliefs, or roots, of women's positiveness will differ between sports. An individual who competes in wrestling, for example, which contains a large amount of physical contact and demonstrations of upper body strength may find that they have body satisfaction from a well-defined and muscular upper body. In contrast, a female gymnast may have body satisfaction from having a strong, but extremely flexible and lean figure. In relation to women's rugby, cricket and netball body satisfaction may result from adhering to the physical requirements of each sport in addition to the acceptance/rejection of associated social behaviours.

Furnham et al (1994) have argued that participants in less 'feminine' activities appear to set less rigid definitions of what is acceptable and desirable in women. Furnham et al go on to suggest that challenging the traditional views of female attractiveness reduces any conflict that might be experienced by women who play male dominated sports. This confirms research in which role conflict experienced by women in sport was not as strong or as common as first thought (Allison, 1991). By resisting societal pressures to conform to socially constructed ideals of femininity, the causes of female rugby and cricket participant's positiveness may be different from those who participate in traditionally 'feminine' sports, such as netball. It is arguable, therefore, that women who shun societal directives of what it is to be physically attractive in determining their worth may also have a more positive view of their body (Dionne, Davis, Fox & Gurevich, 1995).

Silberstein, Striegel-Moore, Timko and Rodin (1988) argue that as weight is a major determinant of women's self-esteem it is likely that satisfaction with that one domain will relate highly to self-esteem. If sport choice created an environment in which

larger body size and heavier weight were not remonstrated, self-esteem and positive body image concepts could result from more physical constructs, such as perceived physical competence and body functioning, rather than by appealing to media images directed at being slim, lean and graceful. Brownell, Rodin and Wilmore (1992), however, have also suggested that sport participants in more 'feminine' sports such as gymnastics may experience preoccupation with weight and body shape in an effort to maintain their femininity. Further investigation into this area will determine the relationship between perceptions of body image, self-esteem and participation in sport (Koff & Bauman, 1997).

Although there have been a number of studies which have considered the experience of women who participate in male-dominated activities such as body building (Guthrie, Ferguson & Grimmett, 1994; Furnham et al., 1994; Marsh & Jackson, 1986) there is very little which investigate women in sports which require a great deal of physical contact with other people. Taking this into consideration the research on which this thesis is based not only investigates differences between women in two male-dominated team sports (rugby and cricket) and a female-dominated sport (netball), it also sought to explore the differences between contact and non-contact sports. The relationship between body satisfaction and sport specific factors helps to highlight which aspect of sport participation has the greatest impact on women's beliefs about their body image. It may be the function a body performs within a given sport which promotes body satisfaction and the subsequent construction of a sporting identity. Similarly, it could be the case that by maintaining a traditional ideal of acceptable feminine behaviour and appearance that has a greater influence on the construction of a woman's identity. By understanding which component of sport

contributes to the development of a positive body image, teachers and coaches may be able to pre-empt and even prevent the ever-increasing incidence of bulimia and anorexia in young women (Koff & Bauman, 1997). By understanding the relationship between different aspects of physical activity to overall body satisfaction sport can be utilised to promote factors relating to positive body image constructs and to de-emphasise negative attributes.

The final section within this chapter focuses on how an individual's perception of their body may impact on overall identity development. There is a discussion on the factors that could influence a person's identity, not only as a sportswoman generally but as a woman in the twenty first century as well. It brings together a discussion on how bodies are socially constructed and recognising how this impacts on everyday life.

2.8 Self-identity

In considering the overall impact of physical activity on perceptions of the body the next step is to assess that perception's influence on the development of one's identity. Each sport has unique playing practices, demanding very different skills and strengths, all of which make an impact on how one develops attitudes toward body satisfaction. Having a sense of usefulness within a sporting environment may influence one participant in a far greater way than another. This may become more apparent when discussing the relationship between preoccupation with weight and perceptions of acceptable body size and shape. If, as Giddens (1991) argues, the physical self is at the root of how an individual creates their own identity it is imperative that researchers investigate how this physical-self develops. Taking social

constructionism to investigate the influence of cultural and social norms, the influence of Western beliefs and behaviours about female bodies may provide an insight into identity development.

Social constructionists would agree that analysing the body, as a purely biological phenomenon is inadequate when considering the role of the body within society and the meanings attributed to physical experiences (Shilling, 1993). Shilling goes on to argue that instead of viewing the body as the foundation of society, "the character and meanings attributed to the body, and the boundaries which exist between the bodies of different groups of people, are social products" (p.70). Taking this into consideration, social constructionism provides an appropriate framework to interpret women's experiences of being physical and the factors that influence the construction of body satisfaction.

The body as socially constructed has been informed by a number of key works, including the anthropology of Mary Douglas and the writings of both Erving Goffman and Michel Foucault. In her work *Natural Symbols* (Douglas, 1970), Douglas developed the idea of the body as a receptor of social meaning and a symbol of society. Groups within society will adopt specific approaches to the body which identify them to a particular social location. Within certain sub groups of society, such as sport teams, there may well be an appropriate clothing style or even bodily shape which supports the distinction of one group over another. Douglas (1970) also points to the means of society to restrict the physical body in times of social crisis, as in the case of war, by questioning any activity which could threaten pre-existing bodily boundaries. This can be clearly seen in the medicalisation of the female body during

the Victorian and early twentieth century, as highlighted within section 2.2, 'Historical legacies'. The social body constrains how the physical body is perceived and experienced, and in turn these perceptions and experiences help to sustain a particular view of society.

The writings of Erving Goffman (1963, 1968) offer another source of influence in recognising how the body becomes socially constructed. In his work, "the management of the body is central to the maintenance of encounters, social roles and social relations, and also mediates the relationship between an individual's self-identity and their social identity" (Shilling, 1993 p.74). This approach to examining the relationship between body management, identity and social roles greatly informs the interpretation of the data on which this thesis is based. Key to understanding the role the body takes within any given situation is how the presentation of the self is affected by social and sporting constructs. Goffman (1963) would argue that individuals usually have the ability to control and monitor their bodily performances in order to interact with other people. He would further this argument by suggesting that although the body is not produced by social forces, the meanings attributed to it are determined by 'shared vocabularies of body idiom' (Goffman, 1963 p.35) which are not determined by the individual.

For Foucault (1977, 1979), the body is the ultimate site of political and ideological control, surveillance and regulation. Foucault would argue that various state apparatus, such as medicine, education and the law come to determine the limits or boundaries of acceptable behaviour. Bodies that transgress established boundaries are punished, creating bodies that are rendered docile but equally, politically and

economically useful to the state. In this way what we as society come to determine as useful and acceptable bodies are directed, not only by social processes but also the meanings given to certain bodies by the groups to which we belong. The physical body, and in particular the sporting body becomes a site where the promotion of dominant bodily ideals takes precedent.

Social constructionism seeks to identify how these dominant body stories are created, how we acquire the signs that indicate where we are from, what our economic standing is, and who we want to attract (Sparkes, 1997). Sparkes describes dominant stories as those which become valued and promoted over others, such as non-disabled bodies over disabled and thin over fat. Shilling (1993) infers that the body, especially within the affluent West, has become a project. It is something that can be worked at and developed to produce an ideal identity. Sparkes (1997) argues that people are not free to choose just any kind of body project, individuals exist within systems of meaning and are thus directed by them. Western society provides an array of technical gadgets to aid transformation (in the guise of diet pills and cosmetic surgery), equalling the number of physical activities that can help one reach the goal of the subjectively interpreted perfect body. The body is viewed as a social product, the meanings and characteristics attributed to that body help distinguish different groups and form the boundaries which demarcate what is acceptable and what is not.

What is important to note is not only how social systems help to create and determine what the body is or can become, but also how the body itself defines society as a whole. Giddens (1991) notes that bodies and the self become co-ordinated within a reflexive project of self-identity. The body becomes immediately relevant to the

identity the individual promotes at any one time. Theberge (1993) notes that sport is one of the most significant cultural practices in the construction of gender. Through investigating the construction of identities within that environment insights into the development of femininity and masculinity in wider society can be explored, whether this be through female sport participants' rejection of traditional ideas on the physical capabilities of women, or by pursuing activities that promote 'acceptable' behaviour. How individuals construct themselves and dictate the body's importance within social systems will provide a greater insight into how society influences identity development and the tactics employed to either overcome or accept such constructs.

Domain specific identities may also influence the development and maintenance of body image. Taking the self-schemata approach from social psychology, generalised beliefs and perceptions about health and exercise behaviours may influence and aid the creation of a physical identity. Fiske and Taylor (1991) define a schema as a "cognitive structure that represents knowledge about a concept or type of stimulus, including its attributes and the relations among those attributes" (p. 98). Such knowledge is gained through experience, and schemata are thought to guide the way we retrieve, select and interpret information. Kendzierski (1994) has applied this construct to exercise through her work on exercise self-schemata and has defined three main types of individuals. Exerciser schematics describe themselves in terms of being an exerciser, being active and rate these constructs as important to their self-image. Non-exerciser schematics view exercise descriptors as clearly not applying to them, but rate them as important to their self-image. Aschematics do not rate exercise descriptors as particularly descriptive of themselves and do not view these as important to their self-image.

Kendzierski does argue, however, that exercise schemata is not merely a reflection of exercise experience and other factors may also influence this development. Biddle (1997) supports this notion by arguing that exercise schemata direct our attention beyond perceived competence within a domain and locates the self more completely within the domains social contexts. For instance, current fashion includes a great deal more sports wear than in the past and may encourage the development of exercise self-schemata. This approach may clarify further the combination of self-attitudes and values that are closely linked with the social contexts in which sport is played.

The images of fit and healthy bodies portrayed by sporting exponents have a dramatic impact on concepts such as 'worthiness' and 'attractiveness' for both women and men. The so-called 'look' (Featherstone, 1991) works around dominant definitions of appropriate body shape and physical attractiveness (Kirk, 1993). Kirk goes on to argue that these definitions are highly salient in the presentation of the body as a symbol of health, success and wealth.

How individuals construct acceptable levels of self-esteem and body image are also important. Individuals within any given society will have a certain criteria of what it is to have positive self-esteem and what it is to have a positive body image. Collins (cited by Fox, 1997) notes the differences in perceptions of bodies in Mexico versus those in the United States. Mexican women were found to view their bodies functionally in terms of being regarded as a good mother as opposed to cosmetic ideals of beauty. It may also be the case that women in sports which require more physical size in order to be functional attribute their identity to such factors.

Goffman (1963) argued that the shared vocabularies of society (body idioms) allow individuals to classify information received from a body, such as weight or hair colour, categorise them and grade people according to a hierarchy. Categories which do not fit dominant ideals are placed lower on the hierarchy. The classifications of non-verbal communication such as dress, movements, posture and physical gestures can also exert a powerful influence over the ways in which individuals seek to manage and present their bodies (Shilling, 1993). Social meanings become attached to certain behaviours, dress and body size. For example, Bovey (cited in Sparkes, 1997) notes, how the condition of being fat can lead to persecution and discrimination. Once internalised these meanings can exert a strong influence on an individual's sense of self and body image. Body management, in which individuals learn how to appear as they wish to be seen, can adapt posture, clothes, and even body shape in order to achieve a given identity. It is also important to note that identities are rarely constant. The function of a body as a sign is greatly influenced by context. Schwalbe (1993) notes "identities can change or disappear, or come into being, as quickly as any kind of sign. As this happens, as people come to signify different things, the self changes" (p. 335).

By understanding the meanings given to certain aspects of the body and its use in a particular situation it is possible to present one self in as many different lights as one wants. Goffman (1968) goes on to argue that if a person's bodily appearance and management categorises them as a failed member of society by others, they will internalise the label and incorporate it into a 'spoiled' self-identity. Women who participate in activities deemed to be inappropriate in terms of body management and display may have constructed suitable self- and social-identities via alternative routes.

Emphasising fitness, team membership or body functionality rather than traditional notions of femininity may direct women to reconstruct their identities based on sporting experiences and not social dictates.

2.9 Summary

The position of women in sport and their experiences within that activity should not be underestimated. Understanding how women do experience sport and how they react to prejudice within that activity can be a source of enlightenment for both women and men. Researchers need to identify the elements contributing most to positive experiences of sport and promote those in addition to highlighting the negative aspects in order to eliminate them. By accepting the existence of difficulties it is possible to begin the implementation of change.

The thesis examines the differences between women in two male-dominated team sports (rugby and cricket) and a female-dominated sport (netball). It also seeks to explore the differences between contact and non-contact sports. As a starting point investigating the participation motives of women in these sports can help in the development of specific programmes designed to encourage different women to play different sports. Understanding why women choose to participate in rugby, cricket and netball, three sports which differ in the level of physical contact and social acceptability of women to play, may provide a number of insights into the experience of the modern sportswoman. There is a need, therefore, to consider whether women choose to participate in sports that are regarded as masculine for similar motives as their male counterparts or for the more 'feminine' affiliative reasons previously indicated.

Following the investigation into participation motives the research will explore the influence of sport choice on the development and maintenance of self-esteem. By combining this relationship with the development of body satisfaction the factors that have the greatest impact on women's beliefs about their body and the construction of the physical self can be greater informed. It may be the function a body performs within a given sport that promotes body satisfaction and the subsequent construction of a sporting identity. Similarly, it could be the case that maintaining a traditional ideal of acceptable feminine behaviour and appearance has a greater influence on the construction of a woman's identity.

In summary, previous research based on women in sport has focused primarily on the differences between men and women's participation motives and the differing rewards they received. Other studies have investigated the effects of participation on self-esteem and body image concepts of women who are physically active compared to those who are not. The research does, however, point to a gap in knowledge concerning women's experience of physical activities that differ in their level of physical contact and in their 'social acceptability'.

Having discussed the relevant literature in this subject area the following chapter reflects on the processes involved in collecting new information. The Methodology and Methods chapter describes the data collection process for both the questionnaire and interview based data collection stages.

Chapter 3 Methodology and Methods

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Introduction

This chapter reflects on the epistemological aspects of the research process and the methods employed at each stage of the project. As such I have decided to describe the process in the first person, identifying how and why I chose to do what I did. The chapter begins with a brief discussion concerning the use of surveys within sport psychology and is followed by a presentation of the debate surrounding the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches within one study. I feel it is important to distinguish at this point the balance between the two techniques selected. Structured questionnaires were used primarily as an indicator to direct interview based investigations at a later stage. The chapter continues by highlighting the benefits of qualitative methods in the investigation of sporting experience with a consideration of the use of semi-structured interviews. This is followed by a discussion of the use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA, Smith, 1996a) as the method chosen for analysing the interview stage of the project. At this stage the chapter proceeds by detailing the method employed at Stage One of the research and the questionnaires utilised. This is followed by highlighting the interview method itself and the practicalities of using IPA.

3.1.2 The use of questionnaires

Survey-based research has been used widely within both psychology and sport related sciences. Quantitative surveys use explicit, standardised and objective methods of sampling, data collection and data analysis (Thomas, 1996). Social surveys can be used

to describe a population, as in the decennial census or in assessing behaviour before and after an intervention. In this particular instance, however, surveys have been used to compare female rugby players, cricketers and netballers on their motives for participation, body image and self-esteem. Regardless of their purpose, surveys “are concerned with the demographic characteristics, the social environment, the activities, or the opinions and attitudes of some group of people” (Moser & Kalton, 1971, p. 1).

Sport psychology practitioners often use standardised tests and scales to assess a variety of factors including state anxiety (State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, Spielberger, Gorsuch & Lushene, 1970), coping with adversity (Smith, Schutz, Smoll & Ptacek, 1995) and psychological skills (Psychological Skills Inventory for Sports, Mahoney, Gabriel & Perkins, 1987). This method helps to guide the practitioner in making appropriate choices in terms of intervention strategies. Scores resulting from the tests help to demonstrate the effectiveness of an intervention in addition to highlighting areas of concern. In relation to the use of questionnaires many authors have demonstrated concern over the recent proliferation of sport psychology tests. Schutz (1993) questioned the validity and reliability of many tests because of their reliance on weak evidence. One explanation provided is related to statistical issues and the limiting use of ANOVA/MANOVA applications (Schutz & Gessaroli, 1993). Another explanation for the problems concerning such tests is the increasing development of situation and population specific measures over the more generalised psychological tests (Gauvin & Russell, 1993). This demonstrates that sport psychologists are developing tests that fit the profiles of tennis, football, rugby and swimming participants rather than one test to cover all sport groups. Gauvin and Russell explain that the use of such tests can run the risk of acquiring results that reflect a very limited

part of sporting reality. Whereas this form of investigation does have its place it also results in limiting the possible connections to wider human behaviour. With this consideration in mind the use of questionnaires in this research was applied with the caveat that results should form the basis for future investigations rather than as sole indicators of opinion. Each questionnaire chosen for this project was not designed for a sport specific population and so can only be valued in determining general outcomes. Subsequent interviewing of an opportunistic sample of the respondents in Stage Two did provide a greater insight into their overall sporting experiences that was lacking in the questionnaire section.

3.1.3 Combining quantitative and qualitative methods

Some social scientists would question the combined use of quantitative and qualitative methods and argue that the purpose of these paradigms are so different that using them together is not possible or desirable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Quantitative approaches tend to construct reality through the composition of causes and effects and it is the researcher's role to qualify these in order to predict behaviour. A more qualitative approach would search for a greater understanding of social phenomena rather than the prediction of it. Rather than try to provide answers to empirical questions, qualitative approaches should clarify the various viewpoints on an important issue (Steckler, McLeroy, Goodman, Bird & McCormick, 1992).

Quantitative and qualitative approaches provide a number of contrasting features that suggest that the two paradigms have fundamental assumptions about the world and how it should be studied (Hammersley, 1996). Bryman (1988) suggests that quantitative and qualitative research use different sorts of data to reach conclusions

about the world they study. This might crudely be defined as the 'hard data' of numbers on one side versus the 'rich data' of words on the other. Although there is a move towards combining methods in order to compensate for the weaknesses of one approach with the strengths of another there are still key philosophical arguments in opposition to any combination of methods. What follows is a brief discussion of two of the key debates in this area: the realism versus idealism and deductivism versus inductivism questions.

A number of researchers (e.g. Smith as cited by Hammersley, 1996) argue that quantitative research is 'realist', in the sense of assuming that true accounts correspond to how things really are. Competing accounts of an event must be judged in terms of whether the procedures used ensure an accurate representation of reality. In contrast, the qualitative researcher is 'idealist' because they would recognise that there are multiple realities and it would not be possible to represent one reality. Hammersley (1996) would argue that this way of referring to quantitative and qualitative work is not appropriate as not all quantitative researchers are realist in the same way that not all qualitative research is idealist. He points to the inclusion of phenomenism in early positivism, whereby there was a recognition that we can have knowledge only of how things appear to us⁴. Equally, Hammersley (1996) also points to the reliance of much ethnographic research on realism, in the sense that the researcher would seek to document features of objects that exist independently of the researcher's interpretation of them. In this way it would appear that there is "no simple match between the realist/idealist and quantitative/qualitative distinctions" (p.165).

⁴ Hammersley (1996) provides a much more detailed account of the philosophical debates between quantitative and qualitative work.

A similar discussion rests on the distinction between deductivism and inductivism as polar opposites for quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative studies do have a strong deductive or hypothetico-deductive methodological approach to research, but this is not always the case (Hammersley, 1996). Many surveys are purely descriptive or concerned with theory generation rather than testing any predictions. Similarly, not all qualitative work is based purely on inductive methods. Hammersley points to the development of grounded theory and its original opposition to deductivism by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Strauss (1987) now highlights how grounded theory not only involves induction but also deduction and verification. It could even be argued that all research in some way requires a level of induction and deduction in the sense that we move from ideas to data as well as from data to ideas (Hammersley, 1996). What Hammersley is trying to suggest is that what we consider to be purely quantitative or purely qualitative is an inaccurate perception of methodology. Research can be focused solely on the prediction of behaviour, or examining the meanings given to certain events, but that this should not be limited to one way of enquiry.

Newman and Benz (1998) argue that the debate surrounding the appropriate use of quantitative and qualitative approaches is based on a false dichotomy. Typically, quantitative and qualitative methods are described as separate categories because of the assumption that the two paradigms are polar opposites. Newman and Benz argue for a more interactive continuum that would search to combine not only the testing of hypotheses but also include interpreting the constructed reality of one's experience.

Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches can benefit the research process by allowing the researcher to assess the extent to which generalised results can be

applied to the individual. This can take place in conjunction with determining how a seemingly unique individual characteristic can be reflected in a group (Dunn, 1994). In providing a series of models Steckler et al (1992) demonstrate how quantitative and qualitative methods can be integrated in one project. In their paper Steckler et al show how qualitative methods are used to develop quantitative measures or how qualitative methods can help explain quantitative findings. Others suggest (e.g. Ponterotto & Grieger, 1999) that those involved in the research process would benefit from such a 'bilingual' and 'bicultural' approach. The resulting "research identity and its related competencies allow the researcher more flexibility and options in both gaining a perspective on a research question and planning its investigation" (Ponterotto & Grieger, p. 55). With this in mind I go on to describe how my constructivist approach to this piece of research is accommodated by both a quantitative and qualitative approach to collecting data.

As previously indicated (section 1.4) this piece of research is conducted within a constructivist/interpretivist framework that suggests that in order to understand the world one must interpret it. Constructivists would argue that what we take to be objective knowledge and truth is the result of perspective. The researcher must identify the process of the construction of meanings and clarify what and how meanings are embodied in the language and actions of the individuals involved (Schwandt, 1994). As such constructivists are antiessentialists and assume that what we take to be self-evident kinds, such as masculine or feminine are the products of complicated discursive practices.

Having determined what a constructivist is it might appear contradictory to use questionnaires to explore the construction of meanings and experiences. I would argue that it is indeed possible to use both questionnaires and interviews in this exploration and for this piece of research beneficial. Each questionnaire used in this piece of research is one way to ascertain an indication of meaning and experience. In no way has it been argued or portrayed that the results from the quantitative stage provide an unlimited understanding of the sporting experiences of women. Indeed it has been strongly argued that the questionnaires should be valued for their ability to provide a base from which to explore the relationship between sport choice and physicality in greater depth. The questionnaires helped to identify the key relationships between factors such as body satisfaction, body functioning and physical appearance. These fundamental relationships were instrumental in the construction of the interview schedule, which proved to be extremely productive. Constructivism is concerned with developing an understanding of experience and in identifying the ways in which meanings are constructed. By combining questionnaires with an in-depth examination of women's experience of sport through interviews the construction of meaning is not only explored but also *negotiated*. Each set of data supports the findings from the other and in doing so strengthens the relationships first indicated by the quantitative stage of the research process. The remainder of this section focuses on how sport psychology has also moved away from a reliance on one method of investigation and the value of combining both a quantitative and qualitative approach to research.

Martens' (1979, 1987) critique of sport psychology methods emphasised a need to move away from the reliance on laboratory-based research towards more field-based approaches. His aim was to study the richness and complexities which characterise

human behaviour rather than simply attach a score to it. That is not to say that all sport psychology questionnaires have insurmountable limitations because many are developed through the findings of group discussions and interviews, as in the development of the Participation Motivation Questionnaire (Gill, Gross & Huddleston, 1983). What is important to recognise is that what we can identify as reality should be defined experientially and located within a social context (Dewar & Horn, 1992; Martens, 1987; Streat & Roberts, 1992). Dewar and Horn (1992) discuss at great length the need to “abandon the belief that there is only one legitimate way of knowing in sport psychology and begin to understand that it is both possible and desirable to examine behaviour in different ways” (p. 17).

As Dewar and Horn (1992) suggest, sport behaviours cannot be isolated meaningfully or independently of the contexts in which the behaviours take place. Sport will have different meanings for different athletes and it is important to recognise that associated behaviours will be developed within those meanings. They also indicate that research within sport psychology should not only examine behaviour using different methodologies, but should also examine how the research questions are developed. We have to go beyond the concerns of utilising various methodologies and focus more on the epistemological basis of these paradigms and the types of questions we ask (Dewar & Horn). With these concerns in mind it is important to recognise the value of using qualitative methods to investigate individual sporting experience.

3.1.4 The benefits of qualitative approaches

The use of idiographic approaches, including interviews, has been recommended by many sport psychologists as a way to gain a better understanding of human behaviour

(e.g. Cote, Salmela, Baria & Russell, 1993; Dewar & Horn, 1992; Strean & Roberts, 1992). The benefits of utilising such approaches can be related to their usefulness in investigating the previously unknown or tenuously known (Strean, 1998). In his article Strean relates heavily to Peshkin's (1993) and Maxwell's (1996) works on the *goodness* and strength of qualitative investigations. Peshkin argues that the goodness of qualitative inquiry may be categorised as description, interpretation, verification and evaluation. Description in good qualitative work provides the basis for an in-depth understanding of how people make sense of their world and the context in which they reside. Although the process of description is always selective it is important to seek out 'thick descriptions' in order to identify the rich characteristics of the phenomena studied. This means reproducing the detail described by the respondents rather than summarising their experiences. By providing detailed accounts of the events experienced by the athletes the reader is allowed to experience vicariously the essentials of that activity and the ways in which it has been interpreted. Interviewing and observing behaviour can help to understand the process by which events and actions occur, for example the processes employed by experts in attaining their highest performances (Newburg, as cited by Strean, 1998). In addition to this is the benefit from developing an understanding of how contextual factors can impact on sporting experiences, for example in restricting the role of young coaches (Strean, 1995).

Denzin (1989) argues that all research is interpretive and certainly within sport psychology the interpretive investigation of performers' lives seeks to expand our understanding of related behaviour. As discussed earlier, the interpretations gathered through interviewing sports participants can form the base from which quantitative instruments can be developed (e.g. Gill et al., 1983). In addition, new models of

understanding can be formulated through investigating an area previously only assessed through quantitative methods by the use of a qualitative approach (see Scanlan & Simmons, 1992 work on sport enjoyment and commitment). Peshkin (1993) goes on to argue that qualitative research helps to identify the important questions, processes and relationships within an activity because it approaches it from a different angle. Here the investigator searches for the individual's response to a situation. For example, by exploring in rich detail the mental qualities of great athletic performers, the genuinely complex nature of how they attain such high performances may be made clearer (Strean, 1998). Again Strean highlights the in-depth analysis of Newburg's doctoral work with two world-class performers, which enabled him to identify the ways in which the athletes developed mental skills and specific strategies.

A qualitative approach may also benefit other work through supporting findings previously discovered by more traditional quantitative methods. For example, the examination of an athlete's experience within a sporting activity can help in the verification of previously developed theories. Strean (1998) cited that Jackson (1993) used this approach to investigate Csikzentmihalyi's (1990) flow theory by seeing if the athletes' flow experiences supported the theory's categories. In terms of evaluation one of the main benefits of qualitative research would be in the determination of causation. Maxwell (1996) would argue that those who assert that qualitative research cannot identify causal relationships are misguided. The difference lies in the kind of causality revealed. Maxwell proposed that quantitative work emphasises the extent to which variance in x would cause variance in y . In contrast to this qualitative investigations would ascertain how x plays a role in causing y and the process

involved. In this sense qualitative inquiry acts as more of an explanatory tool than the more structured aspects of quantitative definitions.

Sport psychologists have used a number of qualitative approaches including the use of in-depth interviews and content analysis of diaries extensively in recent years (e.g. Cohn, 1990, 1991; Dale, 1994, 1996; Eklund, Gould & Jackson, 1993; Fahlberg, Fahlberg & Gates, 1992). Cote et al (1993) argue that there is often a lack of clarity and precision in the procedure employed for data organisation and analysis. However, Krane, Anderson and Streat (1997) note that not all qualitative researchers will use the same procedure for collecting or organising their data and this does not necessarily affect the value of the study because they are merely ways of manipulating and working with the data collected. What should be made clear is that it "is essential that qualitative researchers provide a detailed description of the procedures, decision criteria, and data manipulation that allow them to present the final results of a study" (Cote et al., 1993, p. 128).

3.1.5 Semi-structured interviews

In Stage Two of the research process semi-structured interviews were used to gather information about the individual experiences of women who participate in rugby, cricket and netball. Two sets of interviews were undertaken in which themes identified from the first set were used to direct further exploration in the second. Based on constructivist principles (e.g. Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Schwandt, 1994) the interviews provided a more informed and sophisticated understanding of the construction of the sporting phenomena. The purpose of the inquiry was to understand

the experiences of women in rugby, cricket and netball and to identify the ways in which they construct their perceptions of self-esteem, body image and self-identity.

The purposes of conducting interviews are based around four main themes (Burman, 1994). The first is concerned with subjective meaning, in that an interview attempts to ascertain the meanings the respondent has on a particular topic rather than as a response to a set question. Secondly, an interview allows for an exploration of issues that are too complex to understand via quantitative methods. Interviews are able to access an experience on a number of levels and by utilising a semi-structured approach can allow the interviewer to tailor questions to the points and comments raised by the respondent (Burman, 1994; Smith, 1995). This process permits the interviewer to pursue questions previously not anticipated as relevant and can further the exploration of that topic in a different direction (Bailey, 1994; Hammersley, 1996; Jones, 1985; Searle, 1998). This contrasts sharply with a more structured interview in which “standardised questions with fixed-choice answers provide a solution to the problem of meaning by simply avoiding it” (Cicourel, 1964, p. 108). By embracing a more flexible approach the interview can empower disadvantaged groups by presenting previously unheard views (Mishler, 1986) and develop meaning in relation to their social world.

Thirdly, interviews can also provide an avenue for examining the role the interviewer takes in the research process. Payne (1999) discusses how the presentation of the self can influence the research investigation. Physical appearance, clothing, accent, ethnicity, ablebodiedness and gender (Denzin, 1989; Oakley, 1981; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1996) are all indicators of social status and power and the interviewer has

to reflect on how that might impact on the data. Payne also argues for a transparency towards the topic under investigation in order to fully involve the respondent. It is vital, therefore, that the interviewer embarks on a reflexive practice throughout the whole process which can be used as an aid to analysis at a later stage (Rennie, 1999; Smith, 1996b; Tindall, 1994). Wilkinson (1988) discusses this aspect in relation to having a personal reflexivity whereby there is an acknowledgement of who you are, your individuality as a researcher and how your own personal interests may influence the outcome. Fourthly and finally, and in connection with the reflective practice, is an examination of power relations in the research process and to whose purpose is the interview taking place (Burman, 1994). Among research with women as both researcher and researched Oakley (1981) would argue that by appealing to “sisterhood” the relationship can be equalised. Other researchers (e.g. Cotterill, 1992) have found, however, that the balance of power is not fixed but may vary according to how respondents are recruited and the age and status of those interviewed. There is a move to value the respondent as a co-researcher who collaborates in the construction of knowledge (Tindall, 1994). Although this may be considered to be an ideal approach to research there is still an acknowledgment that it is the researcher who holds the final balance of power and who decides what stays and what does not (Cotterill, 1992).

My presence as a woman and a sportswoman may effect the relationship between interviewer and respondent in a number of ways. Firstly, I felt that my rapport with the respondents was greatly enhanced because I made it clear to them throughout the interview that I had played sport all my life and that I was genuinely interested in their stories. Secondly, because I have played rugby, cricket and netball at some point in

my sporting career the respondent may have felt they were able to explain experiences with reference to sport specific behaviours, knowing that I would 'understand' what she meant. Thirdly, and finally, as a woman I have experienced similar prejudices concerning my sexuality and sporting talent and this helped in my interpretation of the interview material. The data presented in Chapters 5 through 8 should be read with this in mind. This study sought to explore, via semi-structured interviews, the sporting experiences of three previously under investigated groups: female rugby players, cricketers and netballers.

3.1.6 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

The method chosen for the analysis of the interviews is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA, Smith, 1996a). The aim of IPA is to "explore in detail the participants view of the topic under investigation" (Smith, Jarman & Osborn, 1999, p. 218). The approach is phenomenological in that it attempts to examine the individual's personal perception of an event rather than produce an objective statement about it. It also recognises, as in the case of other qualitative work (Baumeister & Newman, 1994; Wilkinson, 1988), that the research process itself is dynamic. The outcome is dependent on the researchers own perceptions and it is the interpretation of both the individual's reflections and the researcher's that is important. IPA has been used extensively within health psychology (e.g. Flowers, Hart & Marriott, 1999; Flowers, Marriott & Hart, 2000; Flowers, Smith & Sheeran, 1998; Jarman, Smith & Walsh, 1997; Osborn & Smith, 1998; Smith, 1996a) and is regarded as particularly useful in examining how patients view the same illness in different ways. Smith, Jarman and Osborn (1999) argue that health psychology starts from the general premise that people think about their bodies and that their talk about

these bodies in some way relates to those thoughts. This approach is strongly influenced by the social cognition paradigm in that it is able to identify the relationship between verbal communications and underlying cognitions.

Smith (1996a) would argue that IPA draws on the traditions of phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. Put simply, phenomenology is interested in an individual's perception and subsequent experience of an event rather than an objective statement about it (Smith, 1996a). Symbolic interactionists would argue that the meanings ascribed to those events should be the focus of social scientists and that the meanings can only be reached through a process of interpretation (Denzin, 1995). One of the key features within this paradigm concerns the self and identity. Denzin contends that the self of the person, connected in part, to their identities, is a multi-layered phenomenon that may be subject to different meanings and social settings⁵. Through appropriate interpretation the meanings attributed to different sporting experiences can help to clarify why women choose to participate in rugby, cricket and netball. It may also help to identify the experiences which ultimately lead women to leave these sports.

At this point Smith (1996a; Smith, Jarman & Osborn, 1999) argues for the difference between IPA and other forms of analysis such as discourse analysis (Potter & Wetherell, 1987)⁶. Discourse analysis would challenge the assumption that verbal reports reflect underlying cognitions and would wish to focus on the reasons why individuals talk about things in certain ways. One premise being that individuals

⁵ This thesis does not intend to discuss extensively the foundations of IPA but would direct future studies to explore this fully. For a deeper understanding of phenomenology see Giorgi (1995) and symbolic interactionism see Denzin (1995)

⁶ This section will not deliberate extensively on the different methods of analysis but would rather focus on the suitability for IPA within this project .

would draw on pre-existing discourses when making statements (see also Potter & Wetherell, 1995). This contrasts with IPA which seeks to understand what the respondent believes or thinks about a particular topic. The difference being that discourse analysts would be sceptical about mapping verbal reports to cognitions and how the focus of analyses should be on the verbal reports themselves (Smith, Jarman & Osborn, 1999). IPA also differs from other forms of qualitative analysis, particularly that of grounded theory (e.g. Charmaz, 1995) in a number of ways. Although both IPA and grounded theory do have similarities in the creation of categories and codes from which to base the analysis there are differences which make this an unsuitable method for this project. Primarily the difference being that the grounded theory approach does not have preconceived hypotheses from which to formulate categories. It also differs dramatically by delaying the literature review in an attempt to prevent preconceptions changing data collected (Charmaz, 1995). This thesis does have a theoretical basis for the interpretation of data and so grounded theory was not considered appropriate. IPA was regarded as a valuable tool for the analysis process because it permitted an in-depth approach to understand the experiences of women within a sporting environment.

3.1.7 Social constructionism as theoretical framework of analysis

The use of IPA as an instrument of analysis is only the first part of the analytical process. It is also important to identify the theoretical framework from which the interpretation of the analysis will be based. With this in mind what follows is a brief discussion of social constructionism and how this influenced the final analysis. As discussed previously within Chapter 2, social constructionism seeks to identify how dominant body stories are created (Sparkes, 1997), how society produces successful

bodies (Shilling, 1993), and how social meanings become attached to nonverbal characteristics (Goffman, 1963). These factors all help to present the sporting self and the social self in particular ways at particular times.

Although it may be difficult to offer a single description of what social constructionism is (Burr, 1995), there are a number of key assumptions that researchers who regard themselves as social constructionists would be likely to follow. Social constructionism insists that we as researchers take a critical stance towards our taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world, including the individuals within it (Burr, 1995). In considering this current piece of research, social constructionism would extend this to questioning the importance of categorising individuals and even activities in the ways that we currently do. For example, the way in which we demarcate individuals and activities as 'feminine' and 'masculine', or bodies as physically attractive or unattractive are the result of a series of constructions based within certain social processes. Utilising a social constructionist perspective would allow me to explore how these definitions become rooted in our everyday understanding of the social world and to actively question whether such definitions truly reflect sportswomen's experiences. It would also be appropriate to examine how individuals reconstruct those definitions based on personal sporting experience.

When considering the need to question the taken-for-granted understandings of the world it is important for social constructionists to recognise that the categories and concepts we use to do this are themselves historically and culturally specific (Burr, 1995). The particular form of knowledge that develops around activities, individuals and occasions are artefacts of the culture in which they exist. Sport and sporting

knowledge are also artefacts of the culture and time in which they are played. It should also be recognised that we should not assume that our ways of understanding are any better than other ways of understanding. The historical legacies of women in sport in relation to acceptable behaviour and appropriate physical appearance, in conjunction with the way in which women present themselves as sportswomen today should provide one way of understanding how such concepts are constructed and subsequently reconstructed.

Another important aspect of social constructionism is to recognise that knowledge is sustained through social processes. Individuals construct their own understandings of the world through interactions with other people and the social processes that direct those interactions (Burr, 1995; Cromby & Nightingale, 1999). These then become *negotiated* understandings of the events, actions and individuals encountered within a historically and culturally specified environment. Interpreting the data within this framework is key to appreciating how rugby players, cricketers and netballers understand the 'truth' of their sporting experience and the factors that may or may not influence the construction of that 'truth'.

The focus of social constructionism is not directed towards ascertaining some objective reality but upon the different meanings with which our worlds become invested. If what we take ourselves and others to be are constructions and not objective descriptions, and if it is human beings who have built these constructions, then it is possible to re-construct ourselves in ways which might be more facilitating for us (Burr, 1998). Simply put, how an individual presents her/himself will depend not only on the situation s/he is at any one time, but also on the ways in which the

environment allows physical expression. It should also be recognised that the categories and concepts used to define how we think and feel about a situation are based within the language we use every day. This adds support for the use of IPA as the method of analysis because of the way in which it suggests a possible relationship between verbal communications and underlying cognitions (Smith, 1996a).

Essentially, the interpretation of the data from both the questionnaire and interview stages will be based on the following premise: that the meanings attributed to sporting experience by these women will be both historically and culturally specific; that my interpretation of an experience is but one interpretation and, therefore, not necessarily better than others; that the focus of the interpretation should be on how social processes determine our understandings of sporting experience; and that the analysis should recognise that individuals construct and reconstruct identities, manage their bodies and present the self depending on the situation and company there are in at any given moment.

3.1.8 Issues concerning validity, reliability and trustworthiness of the research process

Within the analytical process researchers have to be aware of how the process itself may influence the final themes and categories generated. These aspects come to reflect strongly on the validity and reliability of the data produced. In order to construct an appropriate system of qualitative analysis Tesch (as cited by Cote et al., 1993) distinguished between an interpretational and a structural approach. Here the interpretational researcher “overlays a structure of her or his own making on the data as a device for rendering the phenomena under study easier to grasp” (p. 103). On the

other hand structural analysts “assume that the structure is actually inherent or contained in the data and the researcher’s job is to uncover it” (p. 103). The research on which this thesis is based took an interpretational approach to analysis whereby elements, categories, patterns and relationships between properties emerge from the analysis of the data and are not predetermined as in the case of a more structural approach. Interpretational researchers try to develop a classification system which aims to deal with categories that are fuzzily bound within the text itself with minimal overlapping of categories.

Taking this a stage further it is important to begin the discussion of how to develop the ‘trustworthiness’ or quality of the findings that result from qualitative approaches. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) note that qualitative research involves multiple methodologies and has no distinct theory of its own. Providing one-stop criteria for trustworthiness is, therefore, difficult. What many scholars (e.g. Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Tesch as cited by Cote et al., 1993) have attempted to do is produce criteria and technique to achieve them in a way to establish and enhance the findings from a qualitative based study. Lincoln and Guba’s criteria focused on the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of an approach but was still based on many positivistic standards that may not reflect the ideals of a more naturalistic approach (Sparkes, 1998). Manning (1997) goes on to argue that although the criteria used in conventional quantitative research was deemed inappropriate for qualitative inquiry the parallel system developed to legitimise qualitative research was still focused on traditional concepts. Trustworthiness focused on methods aimed at ensuring the research process had been completed properly and as such “trustworthiness was

conceived as a parallel to the empiricist concepts of internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity" (p. 95).

In relation to the reliability of qualitative research there is a current debate as to whether it is possible to actually use that term because of its premise within quantitative work (Jessor, 1996; Merrick, 1999). Reliability traditionally refers to the degree of consistency between instances which are given the same categories by different observers or the same observer on different occasions (Hammersley, 1992). In much qualitative and phenomenological work this definition of reliability is rejected because there is no one 'truth': all knowledge is constructed. The possibility of replication is thrown out because a study cannot be repeated even by the same investigator, given the unique, highly changeable and personal nature of the research encounter (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1994). When discussing reliability, Merrick (1999) refers to the standards imposed on the methods used to collect the data, who collected the data, under what conditions was it collected, what method was used in the analysis and how the interpretation process was undertaken. Reliability within qualitative work cannot function on the restrictions placed on quantitative approaches but should be seen more in examining the relationship between the researcher and the research process itself.

Validity can be said to be the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomenon to which it refers (Hammersley, 1990). In qualitative research, validity is not about establishing the 'truth' but more concerned with understanding the perception the participants have themselves of events (Mishler, 1990; Stiles, 1993). Banister et al (1994) have argued that validity "has to do with the adequacy of

the researcher to understand and represent people's meanings" (p. 143). Methods used to enhance the validity of qualitative findings have been suggested through reaching a consensus of interpretation. This is reached primarily through the triangulation of data and respondent validation. This can happen through the use of alternative methods of data collection of the same event such as diaries and observations but can be problematic if there are discrepancies (Payne, 1999). Other forms of triangulation to be considered are investigator triangulation (e.g. Banister et al., 1994; Gould, Tuffey, Udry & Loehr, 1996). This would result in a discussion among investigators of the raw data themes collected from interview transcripts before acceptance and inclusion in the final set. There may be difficulties with this approach when having to reach a consensus on included themes and the relative importance of themes rejected. Ultimately themes may be considered more valuable to the thesis than others. Taking these concerns into consideration the use of investigator triangulation was considered useful within the interview analysis. The second investigator in this instance had previous experience with interview transcripts and knowledge within the area of women and identity. This process enabled themes to become clearly defined and also introduced topics previously missed.

Respondent evaluation or member checking has been used within sport psychology in an attempt to clarify the data collected, analytic categories, interpretations and conclusions made by the investigator (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This can, however, be problematic in that it assumes that respondents can recognise the reconstructions as adequate representations of their own realities (Silverman, 1993). Other questions include whether this form of verification is useful because, when discussing the possessors of truth and the recognition that truth is constructed who is to say that the

respondents are the real knowers (Gallagher, 1995). Within this piece of research respondent evaluation was not regarded as further evidence of the interpretation process. It was the social construction of their meanings as interpreted by myself that was the primary goal.

Other methods employed to enhance the validity of qualitative research are connected to the issue of trustworthiness of the research process itself. Stiles (1993) noted that the final interpretation of the data should take into consideration the readers, respondents and the investigators themselves. Within this there should be a disclosure of the researcher's orientation, intensive and prolonged engagement with the material, persistent observation, triangulation and discussion of findings with others. It should also, Stiles (1993) adds, more importantly, involve the iterative cycling between dialogue and text. This should involve the 'grounding' of the interpretations by using individual examples in the data to support abstractions or higher level theorising. This is also recommended by Rennie (1999) who suggested that the researcher's role is to tie understandings to the text giving rise to them. The interpretation has to have this grounding otherwise the reader will regard the understandings to have come from the researcher's own subjectivity.

Within sport psychology the quest for trustworthiness has also begun in recent qualitative-based studies. Sparkes (1998) notes that some researchers have developed their own parallel criteria to ensure the validity of sport-based work. He comments on how methods such as the use of thick description, keeping a reflexive journal, method and investigator triangulation, peer debriefing and the credibility of the researcher have all contributed to the evaluation of a study as valid (Eklund, 1996; Gould,

Tuffey, Udry & Loehr, 1996; Jackson, 1995, 1996). What is clear from the reflections of past research is that the investigator should seek out appropriate criteria to ensure the trustworthiness of the research process and evaluation that enhances the quality of the work produced. This thesis employs the techniques of investigator triangulation accompanied by peer debriefing. This refers to the discussion and reaching of a consensus of themes to be included and rejected. This process was carried out alongside intense engagement with the material and a firm grounding of themes within the text itself. Through this attention to the analytic process the resultant findings demonstrate a sound base from which to be counted as representing the respondent's experiences.

3.2 Method I

3.2.1 Study design

The design of the first stage of the study was a between-participants design, in which female athletes from three sports, rugby, cricket and netball completed a booklet containing three questionnaires (see Appendix 11.1). These questionnaires assessed factors which influence motives for participation in a chosen sport (Participation Motivation Questionnaire, PMQ)⁷, attitudinal aspects of the body-image construct (The Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire, MBSRQ) and levels of global self-esteem (The Multidimensional Self-Esteem Inventory, MSEI).

⁷ The Participation Motivation Questionnaire. Available from Diane Gill, Department of Exercise and Sport Science, The University of North Carolina, Greensboro, NC 27412.

The Multidimensional Body Self-Relations Questionnaire. Available from Thomas F. Cash, PhD., Department of Psychology, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA 23529.

The Multidimensional Self-Esteem Inventory, O'Brien, E., & Epstein, S. (1983). Available from Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc. P.O. Box 998/Odessa, Florida 33556.

3.2.2 Sample and access

The respondents were randomly recruited from members of the Rugby Football Union for Women, The Women's Cricket Association (now part of the English and Welsh Cricket Board) and the All England Netball Association. Criteria for selection were based on all respondents being women and participating in only one of the three sports mentioned.

In each case the governing body was approached and approval sought for the study. Contact lists of captains/organisers were collected and subsequently contacted via the telephone. Following an explanation of the study verbal consent was given to distribute the booklet to their members. Numbers distributed were dependent on the size of each club. An accompanying letter explained the purpose of the booklet and a prepaid return envelope was provided with each booklet.

3.2.3 Instruments

The Participation Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ) is an instrument used to assess the importance of certain factors in participation motivation (Appendix 11.1.1). The questionnaire has 30 items reflecting possible reasons for participating in sport, for example, "I want to improve my skills", "I like being on a team", "I like to get exercise" and so on. These items are rated on a Likert-type scale with "very important" scored as three, "somewhat important" scored as two, and "not at all important" scored as one. Eight factors of achievement/status, team membership, fitness, skill development, energy release and affiliation, other situational factors and fun have been identified (Gill, Gross & Huddleston, 1983). The combined item scores

relating to each factor indicate the most important reasons for participating in the respondent's chosen sport.

The PMQ was designed initially for assessing why young people participate in sports (Gill et al., 1983; Gould, Feltz & Weiss, 1985). It has, however, also been used widely to evaluate a number of sporting activities (Kolt et al., 1999) and been adapted successfully to investigate adults' motives for exercise involvement (Flood & Hellstedt, 1991; Kirkby, Kolt & Habel, 1998). A number of researchers have reported the PMQ's test-retest reliability (Gill et al., 1983), internal consistency (Dwyer, 1992) in addition to content validity (Klint & Weiss, 1987) in all of its adapted states. As such the PMQ was valued as a means of obtaining sound indicators of participation motivation in three sports previously not investigated using this instrument.

The Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire (MBSRQ) is a self-report inventory for the assessment of self-attitudinal aspects of the body-image construct (Cash, 1990) (Appendix 11.1.2). The scale contains 69 items with seven factor subscales that reflect both dispositional (evaluation) and cognitive-behavioural (orientation) dimensions through the three somatic domains of "Appearance", "Fitness" and "Health/Illness". Items include "my body is sexually appealing", "before going out in public, I always notice how I look" in the appearance domain, and "I would pass most physical-fitness tests", "I work to improve my physical stamina" in the fitness domain.

The MBSRQ also contains three multi-item subscales reflecting the Body-Areas Satisfaction Scale, investigating body-image evaluation as satisfaction-dissatisfaction

with discrete body features; the Overweight Preoccupation Scale which assesses fat anxiety, weight vigilance, dieting and eating restraint; and the Self Classified Weight Scale which assesses self-appraisals of weight from underweight to overweight. The scale uses a five point Likert response format ranging from “definitely disagree” to “definitely agree”, scores being one to five in this instance and five to one when reversed.

Permission was obtained from Professor Cash (the MBSRQ's developer) to remove the subscales of Health Evaluation, Health Orientation and Illness Orientation because the factors were deemed unnecessary in this present investigation on body attitudes. Reliability of the scale with these three subscales omitted remains stable. The scale now has 50 items within the four subscales of Appearance and Fitness in addition to Body-Areas Satisfaction, Overweight Preoccupation and Self-Classified Weight. The scale has been utilised on a variety of ages (Brown, Cash & Mikulka, 1990; Monteath & McCabe, 1997; Paxton & Phythian, 1999) and sporting activities (Huddy & Cash, 1997; Koff & Bauman, 1997). Through the wide testing of the MBSRQ it has been shown to have acceptable levels of internal consistency and stability in addition to confirmatory factor analysis and construct validity (Brown, Cash & Mikulka, 1990; Cash, Novy & Grant, 1994; Cash, Wood, Phelps & Boyd, 1991). The MBSRQ was valued as an instrument through which indicators of body satisfaction could be identified in three sports which had not previously been investigated.

The Multidimensional Self-Esteem Inventory (MSEI) is a self-report inventory which provides measures of the components of self-esteem (Appendix 11.1.3). It has been

developed and revised a number of times since its initial inception by Epstein (1980). The MSEI has 116 items that provide information for the following 11 scales. Global Self-Esteem is a measure of the highest level of self-evaluation followed by eight component scales as measures of intermediate self-evaluative elements: Competence, Lovability, Likability, Self-control, Personal Power, Moral Self-approval, Body Appearance, and Body Functioning. Identity Integration is utilised as a measure of global self-concept and Defensive Self-enhancement is used as a validity measure to provide important information on the degree to which a person is defensively inflating his or her self-presentation. Respondents fill in a rating scale based on a five point Likert scale that assesses either the degree or frequency with which an item applies to the respondent. Items include "I often give in to temptation and put off work on difficult tasks" and "How often do you expect to perform well in situations that require a lot of ability?".

The theory underlying the development of the inventory is that elements of self-evaluation are structured in a hierarchical fashion with global self-esteem at the highest level. At an intermediary level, the theory proposes that there are components of self-esteem which are more specific to particular domains of life experience. Although the inventory has not been used in a sporting context before the subscales relating to body appearance, body functioning and personal power are of particular interest to this project. A high score on each of these subscales would indicate a sensation of feeling physically attractive, feeling comfortable with their body and would suggest that the individual is assertive and has a strong impact on other people around them. In relation to the validity of the scale a number of studies have

confirmed this through examining eating disorders (Steinberg & Shaw, 1997) and family cohesiveness (Ryan & Lynch, 1989).

3.2.4 Data collection

Questionnaire booklets containing all three questionnaires were distributed by hand at various sporting competitions and also posted to captains who agreed to pass on the questionnaires to their team-mates. Each questionnaire also requested more descriptive information about age, chosen sport, years of experience and level at which the respondent played at. A free post envelope was also provided to aid the return rate. The address and contact details of the researcher were provided in the event of the respondent requiring any further information or having any concerns.

3.2.5 Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences for Windows (Version 6.0) was used to initially produce descriptive data on the extent to which age, experience and standards played at vary across sports. One way analysis of variance with Tukey-HSD post hoc analysis investigated the differences between mean scores on each factor between sport choice and evaluated their significance at the $p<0.05$, $p<0.01$ and $p<0.001$ levels.

The PMQ data provided mean scores of the importance rating each respondent had on the eight factors affecting participation in rugby, cricket or netball.

The MBSRQ data provided information on respondent's attitudes towards their own bodies on the seven subscales previously mentioned and provided an overall picture

of individual assessment. High scorers on Appearance Evaluation, for example, feel mostly positive and satisfied with their appearance, low scorers have a general unhappiness with their physical appearance. One way analysis of variance assessed the differences between sports on the subscales at $p<0.05$, $p<0.01$ and $p<0.001$ levels. Pearson correlations also examined the association between subscales and evaluated their significance by assessing coefficients at levels ranging from below -0.6 to above 0.6.

Finally, the MSEI provided information relating to levels of global self-esteem and how individuals rated themselves on the 11 subscales mentioned previously. High scorers on Body Functioning, for example, are deemed to be well co-ordinated, agile, in good physical condition and comfortable with their body, whereas low scorers feel clumsy, awkward and are uncomfortable with their body. One way analysis of variance assessed the differences between sports on the subscales at $p<0.05$, $p<0.01$ and $p<0.001$ levels. Pearson correlations also examined the association between subscales and evaluate their significance by assessing coefficients at levels ranging from below -0.6 to above 0.6.

3.3 Method II

3.3.1 Design

Two sets of semi-structured interviews were conducted, the interview schedule being developed from and informed by the results of the three questionnaires. Each interview took place at the respondent's home and lasted between 30 - 80 minutes. Each interview was tape-recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim. IPA was performed on all 30 interviews.

3.3.2 Study group

Ten female rugby players, ten female cricketers and ten female netballers were recruited for the interview stage of the project. Initially women from each sporting group were recruited from details provided on returned questionnaires. On two occasions subsequent respondents were recruited through snow-balling when a respondent provided another contact. Each potential respondent was contacted via the phone and told about the interview stage of the research project. When each woman agreed to be involved, arrangements were made for an interview. No specific criteria were set to recruit from all levels of performance or age ranges, the resulting study group did, however, reflect performance levels ranging from club to international in all three sporting groups with ages ranging from 16 to 45 years.

3.3.3 Tools

The interview itself was constructed through combining the initial findings from Stage One with further reading in the area of body satisfaction, self-identity and sporting experience. The interview schedule (Appendix 11.2) developed through two stages. Firstly, the key findings from the questionnaires helped to form three main areas of investigation: the relationship between body satisfaction and physical appearance; the relationship between body satisfaction and body functioning; and the relationship between physical appearance and self-esteem. Secondly, these findings were considered alongside literature pertaining to the development of self-identity and the impact of sport on lifestyle choices. A series of questions were then produced around these areas to direct the interview stage of the research process. Probe questions were also developed to help explore certain areas in more detail as and when the interview reached an appropriate point.

When constructing the schedule it was important to ensure that questions were neutral rather than leading in any way, that jargon was avoided and that closed questions were not used (Oppenheim, 1992). The overriding factor when constructing the questions for the schedule was to direct the respondent into areas of interest but allow scope for their own topics to have access in the interview process.

3.3.5 Data collection

Each interview took place within the respondent's home at a time that was convenient to them. As far as was possible the interview took place with just the respondent and researcher present to avoid unnecessary interruptions. At times, however, this was not always possible. On one occasion the interview took place within a busy bar. The relaxed atmosphere and the use of a microphone still permitted a suitable level of recording and adequate exchange of information. On another occasion the respondent's children engaged her in conversation at a number of points in the interview. Although this created difficulties the interview was still completed, if a little hurried. A tape recorder was used to ensure that all details could be analysed at a later stage.⁸ Using a tape recorder allows the interviewer to concentrate fully on how the interview is proceeding and where to go next rather than trying to write down everything the respondent has said (Smith, 1995). Each tape recording was transcribed verbatim with each line of text given a number to aid the analysis process.

3.3.6 Analysis

Analysis followed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis guidelines set out in Smith (1995) and is based on the assumption that the analyst wants to learn something

⁸ On two occasions the tape recorder was not used and detailed notes were taken throughout the interview.

about the respondent's psychological world. This might be reflected in the form of beliefs or constructs about an activity that the respondent relays or the story told can be regarded as a piece of her identity (Smith, 1995). Meaning is key here and it was the purpose of the analysis process to understand the content and complex nature of experiences rather than measure a frequency of comment. The theoretical argument for utilising IPA has been discussed earlier in this chapter and what follows is a more descriptive account of the analysis process.

The following is one way in which to utilise IPA and the process can be adapted accordingly to the number of transcripts in any given project. Smith (1995) suggested that the list of themes generated from interview one can be used to begin the analysis of interview two. Smith also suggests that you can decide to begin the process anew, producing a list of themes from interview two. After all interviews have been analysed the lists can be combined into one consolidated list for the group. This process would work well with relatively small numbers of scripts because an overall mental image of the work could be maintained. Larger numbers of interview transcripts would be managed better by using the list generated from the initial script as a guide for further analysis, adding new themes as and when they emerge.

Each transcript is presented in a format that identifies each line of text separately and with enough margin space on either side to aid in the interpretative process, see Figure 3.1. Each transcript is read a number of times and the left hand side of the margin used for noting down anything that is interesting or significant about what the respondent is saying. The right hand side of the margin is utilised to identify emerging

theme titles by creating key words that capture the essence of what the text is producing.

Figure 3.1. An example of the layout of each interview transcript.⁹

County player	17. X: I play for West Midlands county as well	level
	18. K: right ok, and how long have you been playing cricket for?	
	19. X: umm since I was about 13	
	20. K: right	
long time	21. X: so that's (laugh)	time
	22. K: yeah (laugh) I can't work it out	
	23. X: no I can't (laugh)	
	24. K: do you remember why you first started playing?	
	25. X: umm the sort of first memories of playing cricket are on umm probably on the beach	
family influence	26. with the rest of my family really	family
	27. K: right	
	28. X: the..for a Yorkshire family of course Yorkshire, cricket	

On a separate sheet emerging themes are listed and connections sought between them.

At this stage main themes may be identified that act as a magnet for smaller clusters of themes. As new themes emerge the transcript is checked again to ensure that the connections found are reflected in the raw material. A completed list of themes is identified for each transcript and can be ordered in a way that reflects the main interests of the project. At this stage it is imperative to provide an identifier of instances which can be utilised in the analysis process, see Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2. An example of the layout of a completed list of themes.

Themes for CRICKET1.	Identifiers
Family influences	C1.1.25 ¹⁰

⁹ K: denotes the interviewer's remarks and X: denotes the respondent's

¹⁰ C1.1.25 refers to cricketer one, page one, line 25. Within the data chapter each respondent will be given a pseudonym rather than a reference number.

The process is cyclical - stages may be completed a number of times through which themes lists may be changed if more useful categories emerge. The completed list from one interview may be used as a guide in the analysis of subsequent interviews. In this process more instances of themes previously found can be identified in addition to the inclusion of new ones. Alternatively, the process can begin anew for each transcript resulting in a new completed list. The completed lists from each interview could then be read together and a consolidated list of themes for all interviews can be produced. Again this process is cyclical whereby new themes emerging from subsequent interviews should be tested against earlier transcripts. Themes may be then modified to reflect higher or subordinate status (for complete details see Smith, 1995).

Because of the large number of transcripts involved in this project it was decided that each transcript should be dealt with separately and each completed list compared with the others produced. Revisiting interview transcripts occurred frequently to ensure that emerging themes were clearly evident within the text itself, in addition to consolidating the links found between groups of themes. At this stage of the research process peer debriefing occurred in which the author and another investigator completed analysis on the same interview and discussed emerging themes. A consensus of themes was reached. This approach also provided an avenue for 'missed' themes to be included. In order to prepare the final lists for differing levels of analysis the categorisation of each theme was refined in which the raw material relating to each theme was re-examined. This process helped to ensure that the theme identified did have sufficient evidence within the text from which it was taken. As a practical note each transcript had a completed list of themes produced which was

subsequently transferred to a Word document file from which quotes and passages were cut and pasted into. This process enabled the investigator to have a series of documents from which to retrieve relevant themes and their associated extracts with ease.

3.4 Methodological issues

This section deals with some of the practical and ethical issues that developed through and after the data collection process. In terms of collecting the questionnaire data there were concerns over the response rate. It is difficult to ascertain the total response rate because each club that received booklets may not have returned all the unanswered questionnaires. This is something, however, that did not reflect on the overall distribution of questionnaires, as there was a fairly even allocation of responses from each of the clubs the questionnaires were sent out to. As such this did not appear to be an intervening variable in the findings.

The interviewing of respondents did have a number of practical problems in that two of the 30 interviews first recorded did not tape adequately and subsequent respondents had to be found as replacements. On another two occasions the tape recorder was forgotten and notes had to be taken instead. This process did reveal how difficult it would have been to notate all the interviews as full attention could not be given to the respondent. The content, however, did reflect the more salient references to their sporting experiences and made the transcription process far easier. Tape recording did make the interview process more effective because full attention could be given to the respondent and I was sure to record all the respondent's details. Another issue relates to the safety of the investigator whilst interviewing unknown respondents. Having

access to a mobile phone and correct maps did increase the sense of security for the investigator and on all but one occasion there were other members of the household in residence.

One concern in the research process relates to the power relationship within an interview situation. Obtaining consent for an interview is problematic in that an understanding of the whole process only occurs after the interview has taken place (Payne, 1999). Transparency of the process was maintained throughout the interview to try and overcome any concerns that respondents might have had over covert investigations. Ensuring anonymity also provides a way to quell fears over sensitive topics. Keeping a reflexive diary was one method used through which any other non verbal information was recorded and used to help in the analysis process (Smith, 1995). In this way any reactions to questions not captured by the spoken word or body language can be interpreted later. This method is also useful for recognising when rapport has not developed or when respondents fail to be drawn into discussing sensitive topics. Taking into consideration these factors and personal reflexivity (Banister et al., 1994; Wilkinson, 1988) the investigator can hope to overcome some of the biases that might result from the interview process.

As referred to earlier in the chapter, Wilkinson (1988) provides a number of factors that should be taken into account when considering the results of the interaction between the researcher and the respondent. Here she points to the need to acknowledge the investigator's role within the research process and to recognise the influence I may have had because of my presence and identity as a woman, researcher and sportswoman. It is evident from the quantity and quality of the interviews that my

previous knowledge of all three sports allowed for a greater exploration into the sensations and experiences these women described. Because of my position as a woman, one who ultimately faces the same prejudices and restrictions as them, discussions surrounding body satisfaction may have been more open than if I was a man trying to understand. This is, of course, impossible to determine at this stage but acknowledging my place alongside these women did contribute to my interpretation and understanding of their experiences. As such my sporting familiarity and knowledge served to 'centralise' my life experience on the research itself and in the construction of knowledge (Tindall, 1994). This point supports the philosophy behind phenomenological investigation, helping to determine the use of IPA, in that each person will perceive the same phenomenon in a different way; each person brings to bear his or her lived experience, specific understandings and historical background (Heidegger, 1962). As such it is unrealistic to assume that researchers will not bring previous knowledge into the research process.

Making this transparent in the analysis and representing myself clearly to the respondents did help to promote the openness of the interviews and allowed the respondents scope for discussing their own agendas. The analysis of the interviews, whilst focusing on the interpretation from a social constructionist perspective, still allowed me to recognise my input and the value it had in presenting the findings.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has presented the methods I used to explore women's experiences of sport and detailed the methodological concerns I found combining quantitative with qualitative approaches. I have also indicated that although there may be certain

questions surrounding the inappropriate use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches in one study, the combination of both questionnaires and interviews in this piece of research added a greater scope for understanding than if one approach was used in isolation. I have examined why interviews are a more productive technique when investigating personal experience than standardised questionnaires but do note the benefits of having a structured questionnaire to inform the development of the interview schedule.

Having considered the methodological issues surrounding this research the next chapter (Chapter 4) presents the findings collated from the three questionnaires. Initially results from Stage One will be considered in isolation before discussing their influence on Stage Two interview development.

Chapter 4 Stage One results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is the first of five relating to the data collected throughout the research project. It focuses its attention on the data collected from Stage One, the use of three questionnaires to assess participation motivation, body image and self-esteem. The chapter begins with a description of the respondents involved followed by the results from each questionnaire in turn. These refer to similarities found within all sports and those results specifically related to rugby, cricket or netball. Following on from this is a discussion of these findings in relation to previous research in the area. Again the discussion section focuses on each questionnaire in turn before summarising all of the results.

4.2 Respondents

Group one consisted of 65 rugby players with a mean age of 26.38 years ($SD = 5.02$) and a range of 16-37 years. Mean experience level (the amount of years playing that sport) was 4.83 years ($SD = 2.9$), with 40 performing at a local league level, 17 at County/Premier level and 5 at National /International level. The remaining three respondents did not include their performance level.

Group two consisted of 61 cricketers with a mean age of 28.8 years ($SD = 9.83$) and a range of 15-52 years. Mean experience level was 10.23 years ($SD = 7.31$), with 31 performing at a local league level, 17 at County/Premier level and 10 at National /International level. The remaining three did not include their performance level.

Group three consisted of 54 netballers with a mean age of 24.76 years ($SD = 7.57$) and a range of 16-47 years. Mean experience level was 11.78 years ($SD = 6.37$), with 25 performing at a local league level, 19 at County/Premier level and 6 at National /International level. The remaining four did not include their performance level.

There were no differences found between sports on age of participants and the level at which they played. There were, however significant differences found between the length of time individuals within a sport had played. Both cricketers and netballers had played for a significantly longer period of time than rugby players, $F(2, 169) = 22.575, p < 0.001$.

4.3 Participation Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ)

4.3.1 All Sports

When asked what was the most important factor in choosing to participate in physical activity, over 80% of respondents of all three sports (total number of respondents 180) chose Team Membership, followed by Fitness, Fun and Skill Development. Table 4.1 shows the frequency of choosing each factor as Very Important on the PMQ scale.

Factor	Frequency
Team Membership	122
Fitness	96
Fun	76
Skill Development	46
Friendship	42
Achievement/Status	6
Energy Release	4
Other Situational Factors	1

Table 4.1. Frequencies of factors for all sports on the PMQ scale, n=180.

4.3.2 Between Sports

When examining the mean scores for each factor the results confirmed the initial finding that Team Membership was regarded as the most important factor in participation motivation for all sports, followed closely by Fitness and Fun. Table 4.2 shows the mean factor scores for rugby, cricket and netball.

Factor	Rugby		Cricket		Netball	
	Mean importance score	SD	Mean importance score	SD	Mean importance score	SD
Team Membership	2.81	.36	2.78	.36	2.74	.42
Fitness	2.75	.38	2.5	.51	2.75	.39
Fun	2.72	.35	2.57	.41	2.67	.41
Friendship	2.42	.44	2.34	.51	2.23	.54
Skill Development	2.31	.56	2.42	.55	2.3	.50
Energy Release	2.04	.44	1.92	.52	2.0	.43
Achievement/Status	2.00	.41	1.91	.45	2.1	.45
Other situational factors	1.54	.40	1.53	.47	1.45	.45

Table 4.2. Mean PMQ importance scores for rugby, cricket and netball.
1 = not at all important 2 = somewhat important 3 = very important

One way analysis of variance on the data set found only one significant difference between both rugby players and netballers and cricketers on the Fitness factor, $F(2, 177) = 6.84, p < 0.01$. Tukey HSD post hoc analysis suggesting that rugby players and netballers had significantly higher scores than cricketers, $p < 0.05$. This meant that rugby players and netballers saw fitness as a far more important motive to participate in that sport than cricketers did.

4.4 Multidimensional Body Self-Relations Questionnaire (MBSRQ)

4.4.1 All Sports

In comparison to norm scores provided by the MBSRQ it was found that all three sports scored less on the Appearance Evaluation, Appearance Orientation, Overweight Preoccupation and Self-classified Weight subscales. All sports did, however, score higher on both Fitness Evaluation, Fitness Orientation and Body

Areas Satisfaction subscales. Table 4.3 indicates overall mean scores on each factor subscale in comparison with norm findings produced by the MBSRQ.

Factors	Norm		Rugby		Cricket		Netball	
	Mean factor score	SD	Mean factor score	SD	Mean factor score	SD	Mean factor score	SD
Appearance Evaluation	3.36	.87	2.97	.57	3.10	.50	3.12	.49
Appearance Orientation	3.91	.60	3.31	.59	3.12	.76	3.51	.62
Fitness Evaluation	3.48	.97	3.90	.60	4.13	.60	4.15	.54
Fitness Orientation	3.20	.85	4.02	.51	3.80	.55	4.0	.50
Body-Areas Satisfaction	3.23	.74	3.24	.59	3.40	.52	3.33	.52
Overweight Preoccupation	3.03	.96	2.60	.93	2.07	.80	2.32	.98
Self-Classified Weight	3.57	.73	3.48	.55	3.16	.50	3.0	.45

Table 4.3. Mean MBSRQ factor scores for rugby, cricket and netball.
Scores range from 1 to 5, 1 indicating a very low score.

4.4.2 Between Sports

One way analysis of variance indicated significant differences on the Self-Classified Weight scale, $F(2, 177) = 7.55, p < 0.001$ and Overweight Preoccupation scale, $F(2, 177) = 4.43, p < 0.01$. Post hoc analysis highlighting that rugby players rated themselves significantly heavier than both cricketers and netballers, $p < 0.05$ and were more preoccupied with their weight than cricketers, $p < 0.05$. Other key results show a significant difference on Fitness Orientation scores, $F(2, 177) = 3.48, p < 0.05$, with post hoc analysis suggesting that rugby players were more fitness orientated than cricketers, $p < 0.05$. Finally, significant differences were found on the Appearance

Orientation scale, $F(2, 177) = 4.70, p < 0.05$. Post hoc analysis demonstrating that netballers had significantly higher scores than cricketers, $p < 0.05$, but no differences were found between sports on the Body Areas Satisfaction Scale or Appearance Evaluation subscale.

4.4.3 Rugby Players

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for rugby players on each of the seven subscales. The principal findings indicate the strong relationship between both Appearance Evaluation and Fitness Evaluation to Body-Areas Satisfaction, $r = 0.74, p < 0.001$ and $r = 0.49, p < 0.001$ respectively. Table 4.4 shows all 17 significant correlations (see Appendix 11.3.1).

4.4.4 Cricketers

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for cricketers on each of the seven subscales. The key correlation with cricketers, as with rugby players, is the significant relationship between Appearance Evaluation and Body-Areas Satisfaction, $r = .58, p < 0.001$. Table 4.5 shows all nine significant relationships (see Appendix 11.3.2).

4.4.5 Netballers

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for netballers on each of the seven subscales. Once again the major finding was the strong relationship identified between Appearance Evaluation and Body-Areas Satisfaction, $r = 0.72, p < 0.001$. Table 4.6 demonstrates all seven significant correlations (see Appendix 11.3.3).

4.5 Multidimensional Self-Esteem Inventory (MSEI)

4.5.1 Between Sports

Initially mean scores were compared for each sport on each of the eleven subscales.

Table 4.7 shows the mean scores for each sport choice on each of the subscales.

Scale	Norm		Rugby		Cricket		Netball	
	Mean factor score	SD	Mean Factor Score	SD	Mean Factor Score	SD	Mean Factor Score	SD
Global Self-esteem	32.65	7.10	29.95	6.3	32.26	6.23	32.41	6.37
Competence	35.53	5.92	36.37	5.3	36.02	4.83	37.02	4.35
Lovability	36.90	7.42	33.79	7.37	37.28	7.25	37.13	8.03
Likability	35.66	5.23	34.20	4.74	36.1	5.29	35.28	4.83
Self-control	34.21	6.22	33.05	5.25	35.93	4.94	33.72	6.15
Personal Power	33.37	6.17	34.11	6.61	34.18	6.31	34.93	6.3
Moral Self-approval	39.50	6.06	37.62	6.11	39.66	5.26	38.37	7.04
Body Appearance	31.22	6.76	29.09	6.25	30.71	5.92	31.3	5.76
Body Functioning	32.31	6.82	33.59	6.01	34.98	5.12	35.76	4.73
Identity Integration	33.06	7.01	32.26	7.0	34.31	6.76	31.96	7.27
Defensive Self-enhancement	47.43	7.81	46.49	7.20	49.80	7.18	46.96	6.87

Table 4.7. Mean MSEI factor scores for rugby, cricket and netball.

Scores between 40-59 are considered to be in the normal range, scores of 30 through 39, and 60 through 69 are considered moderately low and high respectively. Scores at or below 30, and at or above 70 are considered very low or very high respectively.

One way analysis of variance indicated a significant difference on the Defensive Self-enhancement scale, $F(2, 177) = 3.91, p < 0.05$, with post hoc analysis showing that

cricketers were rated significantly higher than rugby players on inflating views of their own self worth (MSEI manual description), $p < 0.05$. Both netballers and cricketers had a significantly higher score than rugby players on the Lovability scale, $F(2, 177) = 4.29, p < 0.05$. Cricketers, moreover, rated themselves significantly higher than rugby players on the Self-control scale, with cricketers having greater self-discipline, $F(2, 177) = 4.77, p < 0.01$. Post hoc analysis did not find any significant differences between sports on the Body Appearance or Body Functioning scales.

4.5.2 Rugby Players

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for rugby players on each of the eleven subscales. The results indicated how strongly related Body Appearance was to Global Self-esteem, $r = 0.64, p < 0.001$. Other important correlations were found between Global Self-esteem and the subscales of Competence, $r = 0.58, p < 0.001$, Likability, $r = 0.55, p < 0.001$ and Body Functioning, $r = 0.54, p < 0.001$. Table 4.8 illustrates all 37 significant relationships (see Appendix 11.4.1).

4.5.3 Cricketers

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for cricketers on each of the eleven subscales. Results were similar to that of rugby players with key correlations identified between Global Self-esteem and Body Appearance, $r = 0.66, p < 0.001$, Global Self-esteem and Competence, $r = 0.69, p < 0.001$, and Global Self-esteem and Identity Integration, $r = 0.67, p < 0.001$. Table 4.9 illustrates all 48 significant correlations (see Appendix 11.4.2).

4.5.4 Netballers

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for netballers on each of the eleven subscales. As with both rugby players and cricketers key relationships were found between Global Self-esteem and Body Appearance, $r = 0.78$, $p < 0.001$, and between Global Self-esteem and Identity Integration, $r = 0.78$, $p < 0.001$. Body Appearance was also strongly associated to both Identity Integration, $r = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$, and Likability, $r = 0.66$, $p < 0.001$. Table 4.10 illustrates all 45 significant correlations (see Appendix 11.4.3).

4.6 Overview of findings

The difference found between sport groups on the length of time individuals had played might indicate the relatively late introduction to rugby many women had. Many women do not get the chance to take up this activity until after attending university, whereas netball is played from a very early age. It is thought that cricket, as a non-contact sport is also available to girls at school, as indicated by the English Cricket Board statistics on participation rates. This issue is explored fully within the following chapters, in particular Chapter 5, 'Sporting Identity', recognising the lack of opportunities available to some of the women interviewed.

The results from the Participation Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ) indicate that team membership is the most important reason why women choose to participate in rugby, cricket and netball. Another significant finding was that both rugby players and netballers rated fitness as having greater influence on participation than cricketers.

The Multidimensional Body Self-Relations Questionnaire (MBSRQ) found that rugby players perceived themselves to be more overweight than underweight than both netballers and cricketers. Rugby players were also found to be more preoccupied with their weight than cricketers. Rugby players were more fitness oriented than cricketers and netballers were more appearance oriented than cricketers.

For all three sports it was found that as 'body-areas satisfaction' increases there is a decrease in weight preoccupation. Rugby players were found to be the only participants to demonstrate a correlation between how athletically competent they felt and body-areas satisfaction. Both rugby players and netballers found that as feelings of physical attractiveness increased so did levels of body satisfaction. Although there were a number of significant correlations found between the subscales the most striking was how all three sports related satisfaction with physical appearance to overall body-areas satisfaction.

Results from the Multidimensional Self-Esteem Inventory (MSEI) identified rugby players as having significantly lower levels of 'lovability' than both netballers and cricketers. Cricketers also rated themselves as having significantly higher levels of self-control than rugby players although they also demonstrated significantly higher levels of inflating their own self worth. There were no differences between sports on perceptions of physical attractiveness or feelings of being comfortable/in control of their own bodies.

The most striking relationship found for all sports was between satisfaction with physical appearance and global self-esteem. The netball group also demonstrated the

strongest correlation between satisfaction with physical appearance and identity integration indicating its influence on the overall sense of identity netballers have of themselves. This is in addition to both cricketers and netballers relating self-discipline as far more important to identity integration than rugby players. All three sports did show significant relationships between satisfaction with physical appearance and body functioning although the rugby players demonstrated the weakest link.

The following sections of this chapter provide a brief discussion of how these findings relate to previous sport based research. This process will enable a clearer picture of the similarity and difference between rugby players, cricketers and netballers' experiences to develop. This section will also identify some of the limitations of performing correlational research and the potential for using more sophisticated statistical techniques. It will also be made clear that there are a number of questions that remain unanswered, ones that would suit a more qualitative approach to investigation. A rationale for focusing on the interview based data is provided.

4.7 Participation Motivation (PMQ)

Initial results from the PMQ confirm general research findings (e.g. White, 1993; White & Duda, 1994) that suggest that women rate team membership as the most important factor when choosing to participate in sport. It was also found that achievement/status was rated as one of the least important factors in sport participation. Female sport participants place a greater emphasis on team oriented goals (White, 1993; White & Duda, 1994), rather than regarding sport as an agency to further future career prospects, as is the case for male participants (Finkenberg & Moode, 1996; Gill & Dzewaltowski. 1988; White, 1995).

There were no significant differences between the sports in relation to team membership or friendship. This suggests that all female sport participants, regardless of their sport choice, chose to play for social and team oriented goals rather than purely competitive or reward oriented objectives. What is left unanswered is how team membership might impact on these women's sporting experiences and if this differs because of the physical nature of each sport or other social expectations. The use of interviews within Stage Two of the research process provided one way to investigate these unanswered questions.

4.8 Multidimensional Body Self-Relations Questionnaire (MBSRQ)

One of the key findings from this questionnaire indicates that for all sports satisfaction with physical appearance has the strongest relationship to overall body satisfaction, although the effect was far greater for rugby players and netballers than the cricketers. What these results may be highlighting is that regardless of the function a body takes within a sporting environment one's physical appearance still has the strongest influence on body image constructs. Dissatisfaction with such a domain would, therefore, have a strong influence on overall sense of self-worth (Cash, 1994; Harter, 1985; Rodin, Silberstein & Striegel-Moore, 1985; Silberstein, Striegel-Moore, Timko & Rodin, 1988; Smith, Handley & Eldredge, 1998). Henderson-King and Henderson-King (1997) argue that individuals who perceive themselves to be further away from the 'ideal' body shape express more negative feelings about their body. What could be happening is a reflection on traditional ideals of feminine attractiveness rather than sport-based requirements.

The results, however, do show that there is a strong relationship between 'body-areas satisfaction' and the extent to which an individual feels athletically competent but only for rugby players. Taking Furnham, Titman and Sleeman's (1994) argument that by adhering to the norms of a given sport body satisfaction increases, rugby players may find that size, weight and shape are no obstacles to playing rugby, and for some positions are essential. This finding could also suggest that for cricket and netball, physical appearance may be far more important than other body related constructs, such as the role their body takes within sport.

All sports did indicate that as satisfaction with physical appearance drops preoccupation of weight increases, although the effect again is far greater for rugby players and netballers. A netballer's preoccupation may be influenced by an effort to maintain the 'ideal' shape for a netballer. This being the traditional ideal of the tall, slim and fit woman, which is closely associated with the ideals for women in general within Western society (Butler & Ryckman, 1993; Cohn & Adler, 1992). Netballers were also found to be significantly more oriented towards their appearance than cricketers highlighting again the notion that physical appearance has the strongest influence on overall body satisfaction. One explanation for these views may be that women who choose to participate in netball are trying to maintain a more traditional ideal of femininity associated with gender specific sports. Snyder and Spreitzer (1974) first noted that women who participate in such 'feminine' sports find that the maintenance of a feminine appearance is facilitated through that experience. As physical appearance is one of the key areas through which women develop positive self-images in terms of being valued and seen as successful (Mazur, 1986; Eagly,

Ashmore, Makhijani & Longi, 1991) this would subsequently reflect on their body image construction.

Furnham et al (1994) have demonstrated that women who participate in sports considered to be less feminine set less rigid definitions as to what is acceptable and desirable in women. It may be the case that female rugby players simply define feminine in alternative ways. Preoccupation with weight for rugby players may be more to do with fulfilling a physical requirement than an appearance one. Examining in greater depth the experience of participating in rugby, cricket and netball and its subsequent effects on body image construction a greater understanding into how sport impacts on everyday life should emerge. As Fox (1997) argues understanding the physical self is the key to understanding the total self and through the use of interviews these questions can be approached more effectively.

As predicted all sports were found to have high levels of body satisfaction. The question arises as to how the players of each sport reached that level of satisfaction when each sport differs so greatly in terms of the physicality needed to play. Other questions also remain unanswered in relation to the impact the function a body makes within a sporting environment on body satisfaction. In addition, how body satisfaction may be influenced by perceptions of physical attractiveness and where these perceptions originate also need to be explored. These questions and others were considered in the interview stage.

4.9 Multidimensional Self-Esteem Inventory (MSEI)

One striking finding related to the relationship between satisfaction with body appearance and identity integration. All sports did show a positive relationship between the two subscales with netballers having the strongest. The implications of this are important. Identity integration looks at the sense of identity an individual has, having well defined goals, an inner sense of cohesion and the ability to assimilate new information into directing life experience (MSEI manual definition). It was also found that, although all sports had very strong associations between satisfaction with body appearance and global self-esteem, this was again strongest for netballers. These two findings suggest that, for netballers, satisfaction with body appearance has a far greater impact on the development of identity and self-esteem than cricketers and rugby players.

As was noted earlier in the MBSRQ findings all three sports demonstrated a strong relationship between scores on body appearance and body functioning. They were, however, not as high as expected and in particular rugby players had the weakest relationship among the sports. Competence, whereby an individual feels capable of developing new tasks and feels effective, was also correlated to body functioning and satisfaction with physical appearance. Results again indicating that rugby players had the weakest relationship, contrary to expectations. In addition to this result, body functioning was only related to identity integration for netballers, although the relationship was very weak. If, as the MBSRQ demonstrated, rugby players had a strong relationship between physical competence and body-areas satisfaction this still has no effect on how the identity integrates itself. Identifying the importance of satisfaction with body appearance and its relationship to physicality and functionality

need to be explored in greater detail to try and understand why there are slight discrepancies in the findings. The questionnaires used may not be an effective method in unpacking this complex experience and so these issues were explained more fully within the interview stage of the research.

As expected respondents from all three sports did have high levels of self-esteem and demonstrated strong relationships between lovability and likability, and lovability and satisfaction with body appearance. This confirms general findings in that satisfaction with physical appearance is correlated to higher levels self-esteem (International Society of Sport Psychology, 1992; Paxton & Phythian, 1999. The higher the ratings on satisfaction with physical appearance stemming from physical activity the higher the scores on self-esteem (Folkins & Sime, 1981).

Both netballers and cricketers had strong positive associations between self-control and identity integration, netballers also demonstrating a similar relationship between self-control and satisfaction with body appearance. These results indicate that netballers and cricketers alike regard self-discipline, controlling eating and drinking as having greater importance than rugby players to overall satisfaction with body appearance and identity integration. These results demonstrate that controlling weight and feeling capable of mastering new tasks are all related to how the body can perform a particular function on the sport arena. What is missing is an explanation of how the physicality of a sport or social acceptability of an activity might influence this process to a greater or lesser extent.

4.10 Summary

The major finding in relation to the MSEI was that rugby players and netballers did not differ significantly on the majority of factors, in particular satisfaction with body appearance and body functioning. This indicates that rugby players and netballers rate themselves similarly on body appearance but may have developed this satisfaction through different ways, as the result of different playing experiences. The difference being that, for netballers, body appearance is highly correlated to self-control whereas, for rugby players, it is not. Control over one's body shape and size is, therefore, far more important for netballers. Netballers may be influenced far more by societal constructions of femininity and focus on ways in which to maintain this than rugby players. Questions such as these need to be explored in greater detail to identify which aspect of sporting experience may come to have the greatest influence on self-esteem development and body image construction.

Stage One provided a number of key findings that informed the development of the interview schedule. In particular, results indicated the importance of appearance evaluation and body-areas satisfaction for all three sports. Feeling content with specific body areas is vital to general satisfaction with appearance. It is also apparent that regardless of sport choice women in this sample did not feel any less satisfied with their physical appearance simply because of their sport choice. Despite differences in physical contact and social acceptability women are not devaluing themselves in terms of physical appearance.

It is also clear, however, how important satisfaction with body appearance is to overall self-esteem. Rugby players alone relate how physically competent they are to

satisfaction with body-areas and this requires further investigation. There may be strong theoretical implications in the construction of rugby player's body image within a sporting environment because it may be influenced by the extent to which it is functional, rather than the extent to which it enables the formation of an aesthetically pleasing and 'feminine' shape as netballers may be able to do.

4.11 Development of the research and introduction to Stage Two

The use of questionnaires in Stage One provided a solid foundation from which further investigation into identity construction and the experiences of women in sport could begin. The findings also suggest that sporting experience is a complex series of interrelationships between body satisfaction, physical self-worth and team membership. Having investigated women's sport experiences on a one-dimensional level the focus of the research on which this thesis is based now developed towards exploring the multidimensional meaning of women's participation, body satisfaction and identity development. These questions were not and could not be answered by the questionnaire approach alone. Whilst the questionnaires allowed for a instant consideration of participation motivation, body image and self-esteem they did not allow for a true understanding of what it is to be a female rugby player, cricketer or netballer.

The analysis used to assess the relationships between body satisfaction, physical appearance, body functioning and so on, may also be problematic. Questionnaires such as the MBSRQ and the MSEI were both designed to ascertain some form of *global* indication of body related attitudes or self-esteem. Calculating a relationship between factors within each questionnaire would not, therefore, be a surprising result.

Indeed, one would hope that there would be correlations between the factors otherwise it could be an indication that the questionnaires do not assess those qualities it purports to do so.

Equally, finding a correlation between two variables does not necessarily allow the conclusion that one of the variables is causing the other to occur (Goodwin, 2002). The lack of control over the variability in one or other of the variables under investigation makes it impossible to conclude anything about cause and effect. This lack of control is one of the key limitations in using this form of correlational analysis. If there is a correlation between two variables, X and Y, it is possible that X causes Y to occur, or it could also be that Y is causing X to occur. This is called the *directionality problem*. It could also be that a third and unknown variable could be causing the change in either variable, making it very difficult to determine the direction of the relationship or the cause of any change in a variable under investigation (Goodwin, 2002). It is agreed that identifying any cause and effect relationship purely on the results of the statistical techniques used is not possible, but they can go some way to suggest an association between factors such as body satisfaction and physical appearance. There were a number of factors that were only found to have weak relationships between them. This could suggest that the factors which had strong associations might provide a greater source of understanding than others. This can be used to inform other methods of investigation, as in the development of the interview schedule.

The interview schedule developed through two stages. Firstly, the key findings from the questionnaires helped to form three main areas of investigation: the relationship

between body satisfaction and physical appearance; the relationship between body satisfaction and body functioning; and the relationship between physical appearance and self-esteem. Secondly, these findings were considered alongside literature pertaining to the development of self-identity and the impact of sport on lifestyle choices. A series of questions were then produced around these areas to direct the interview stage of the research process.

If the purpose of the research had been more concerned with prediction than meanings given to sport experiences, regression analysis may have been a more useful statistical technique to employ. The purpose of using regression analysis, and in particular bivariate regression, is to use a person's score on one variable (the predictor variable) to make predictions about that person's score on another (the criterion variable) (Aron & Aron, 1999). Although limited to two variables, this technique would have provided a greater predictive element to this piece of research by clarifying the strength of the association between, for example, body satisfaction and physical appearance or body functioning and global self-esteem.

Multiple regression analysis would also be one way in which to assess the accuracy of predictions. This is a technique in which the correlations of several predictor variables are summed to give a better prediction of the criterion variable (Coolican, 1994). Multiple regression analysis in this study may have proved useful to ascertain how body satisfaction is effected by physical appearance, body functioning and personal power together. Multiple regression can, however, be considered problematic in that there is no agreement on how to judge the relative importance of the several predictor variables in predicting the criterion variable (Aron & Aron, 1999). It would appear

that although a stronger technique in overall prediction, the analysis still requires the researcher to determine the importance of one variable over another. As this present piece of research only sought to identify *possible* relationships between factors and to provide a source of information to develop the interview schedule, both regression models were not considered. If an intervention had been used to increase body satisfaction, which encompassed a number of strategies, then multiple regression analysis would prove to be the most appropriate statistical technique to use in assessing which strategy was most predictive of an increase in body satisfaction.

Having considered alternative statistical techniques to enhance the predictive quality of the questionnaire data, it is important to recognise why this was not chosen as an appropriate analytical tool. Stage One of the research process was always deemed to be a stepping stone towards a more in-depth examination of the meanings attributed to the sporting experiences by the women within this study. It was never conceived to be a purely predictive piece of research. The rationale for focusing on the qualitative section of the research process was to highlight the complexities of the relationship between body satisfaction, sport choice and the definition of physical attractiveness. The quantitative data produced a number of indicators to explore in the interviews, and was not to be relied upon in isolation as a way of understanding sporting experience. The quantitative data did produce a wealth of information concerning the impact of sport on body image, self-esteem and participation motivation but left a range of unanswered questions. Such questions relate to why body satisfaction depends more on physical appearance than body functioning and why rugby players were more preoccupied with weight than cricketers. This essentially is why the interview stage of the research process is vital and is the focus of this thesis.

Quantitative data can only produce an indication of the meanings and feelings given to certain events. A qualitative approach can provide the rich data that can clarify why and how certain meanings become attributed to a person, sport or even bodily shape. This is why the focus of the thesis is on the qualitative work and why more sophisticated statistics were not performed on the questionnaire data.

Stage Two employed semi-structured interviews in an attempt to understand some of the underlying questions left unanswered. The interviews were used to investigate how sport promotes and facilitates such constructions by understanding the meanings given to sport activities by the women themselves. By clarifying the interrelated factors that influence positive and negative experiences of sport and how women overcome them a greater appreciation can be gained of what it is to be a modern sportswoman.

What follows is a consideration of the sporting experiences of 30 women. Throughout the next four chapters the interpretation of meaning is prominent. The accounts presented attempt to identify key aspects which influence how perceptions of sportswomen are constructed and manipulated by gender stereotyping and behavioural expectations. In order to develop an understanding about the experience of being a sportswoman it is important to recognise the value of the respondent's own words. As such, the following chapters refer directly to the interview transcripts, highlighting the consequences of sport participation and drawing conclusions throughout the thesis.